

Grades K-12

Utah Gifted & Talented Handbook



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State Superintendent of Public Instruction
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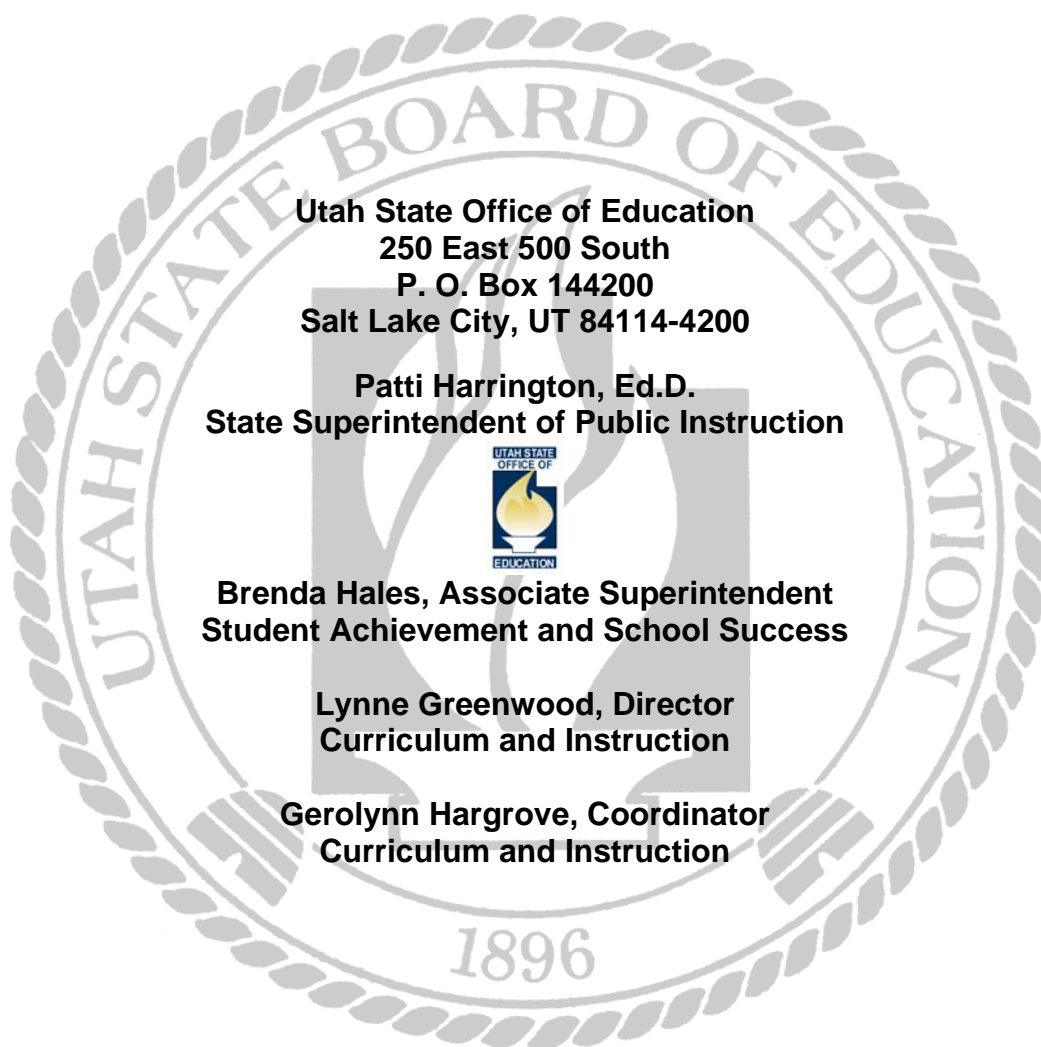
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Foreword

“There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of a comfortable inaction.”

—John F. Kennedy

(cited in Blaydes, 2003, p. 205)

This publication provides Utah educators with information to assist in initiating or improving services for children who are gifted and talented. It is organized to respond to questions that district/charter personnel may have or need to answer regarding gifted and talented education, and may be used to prepare the annual local written plan for gifted and talented education required by Utah State Administrative Rule R277-711-3.D (See Appendix A). This publication is intended to be used as a technical support document only, and does not have the weight of law.

This document is not intended to be comprehensive in nature, but a beginning reference that identifies issues and potential solutions for educators involved in providing services for gifted and talented learners. Educators are encouraged to consult other resources, including recognized experts in the field, professional organizations, and professional literature.

The nine critical topics addressed in this handbook were selected through conversations among State Office personnel, district coordinators, university faculty members, and representatives of the state gifted and talented organization. These topics are: foundations, identification, program standards, service options, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, social and emotional needs, special populations, parent and community relations, and leadership. Although each topic is discussed separately, none of the components can operate independently of the others. Exemplary gifted and talented education practice requires consideration of all components as part of a total plan.

I. Foundations

“Cowardice asks the question ‘...Is it safe?’ Expediency asks the question ‘...Is it politic?’ Vanity asks the question ‘...Is it popular?’ But conscience asks the question ‘...Is it right?’ And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one’s conscience tells one that it is right.”

*—Martin Luther King, Jr.
(cited in Gifted Adults, 2007)*

Utah Administrative Rules (see Appendix A) articulate a specific definition of *gifted and talented students* and require districts to submit an annual plan that includes a “written philosophy for the education of gifted and talented students that is consistent with the goals and values of the school district and community” (R277-711-3.D(1)).

The Gifted and Talented Students

Who Are Gifted and Talented Students?

Gifted and talented can be defined at three levels. These are the theoretical, the official, and the operational.

First is the theoretical level, in which scholars propose a definition, based on research and their particular psychological or educational bent. Historically, the perspective that has dominated gifted and talented education is the concept of general intelligence. This posited that an underlying intellectual capability serves as a foundation for all other specific abilities. The great Stanford University scholar Lewis Terman (1925) is usually credited with establishing this perspective. Currently, the most widely recognized theory of giftedness and talent is the Three-Ring Conception advanced by Dr. Joseph Renzulli (1978) from the University of Connecticut. Dr. Renzulli argues that giftedness comes from three clusters of behavior—above-average ability, creativity, and task commitment—that are brought to bear upon valued areas of human endeavor. Another popular theoretical construct that has been adopted by many educators is Multiple Intelligences, as proposed by Dr. Howard Gardner (1983) from Harvard University. Dr. Gardner posits eight specific intelligences (i.e., verbal/linguistic, mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic). Giftedness and talent are found in those individuals whose specific profile of intelligences leads them to extraordinary creativity or leadership within a domain of human productivity. The profile can consist of extreme aptitude in any one intelligence, or in a combination of intelligences.

Consideration of theoretical perspectives is important for a district because it has clear implications for the second level of definitions—the official level. At the official level, an authorized legal body adopts a specific definition of “gifted and talented.” Obviously, if the theoretical and official definitions are not in harmony, district personnel and patrons

will sense a conflict that could impair a district's ability to serve gifted and talented learners.

The most widely used official definition was originally stated in 1971 in a report to Congress (usually referred to as the *Marland Report*) on the condition of gifted and talented education in the United States. The most recent version of this definition was articulated in the federal report *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent* (usually called the *National Excellence Report*, U.S. Department of Education, 1993), which states:

Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor (p. 3).

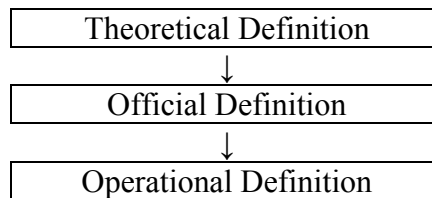
Several states, including Utah, adopted the Marland definition, through action by the State Board of Education, as they began initial efforts to qualify for federal dollars to improve their programming for gifted and talented learners.

As defined in the Utah Administrative Rule R277-711-1.B:

"Gifted and talented students" means children and youth whose superior performance or potential for accomplishment requires a differentiated and challenging education program to meet their needs in any one or more of the following areas:

- (1) general intellectual: students with high aptitude for abstract reasoning and conceptualization, who master skills and concepts quickly, and who are exceptionally alert and observant;
- (2) specific academic: students who evidence extraordinary learning ability in one or more specific disciplines;
- (3) visual and performing arts: students who are consistently superior in the development of a product or performance in any visual and performing arts;
- (4) leadership: students who emerge as leaders, and who demonstrate high ability to accomplish group goals by working through and with others;
- (5) creative, critical, and productive thinking: students who are highly insightful, imaginative, and who consistently assimilate and synthesize seemingly unrelated information to create new and novel solutions for conventional tasks.

The third level of definitions of gifted and talented is the operational level. Operational definitions consist of the actual procedures and instruments used to identify students as gifted and talented. Identification procedures (or operational definitions) are discussed in Section II of this document. The point for now is that all three levels of definition should flow from one to the other (i.e., from theoretical to official, from official to operational), as illustrated below. This flow is imperative if identification practices and programming are going to be defensible.



The Need for Gifted and Talented Programs

Why are gifted and talented programs needed?

In considering the variety of philosophical perspectives that can be taken, districts will be able to develop a rationale for gifted and talented education. Such a rationale is important for creating defensible programs for gifted and talented learners. Dr. Barbara Clark (2008) has identified several bases that can serve as a foundation. These are shown in the table below.

Perspective	Rationale
Right to Learn	“Giftedness” is a label used to indicate a high level of intelligence; it has a dynamic quality that can be furthered only by participation in learning experiences that challenge and extend the child’s level of intelligence, ability, and interest (p. 6).
Equal Opportunity	The school, as an extension of society’s principle of equity, purports to provide an equal educational opportunity for all children so they can develop their intellect and talents to the fullest potential. Because all children must, therefore, be educated at their level of development, it is against the principles of a just society to refuse gifted and talented children the right to educational experiences appropriate to their developed level of ability (p. 7).
Individual Cost	When human beings are limited and restricted in their development, we run the risk of creating both physical and psychological dysfunction (p. 7).
Talent Development	Society gains from the greatest advancement of all the abilities and from the highest development of all the talents of all its members, whatever their areas of strength (p. 7).
Individual Differences	Gifted youngsters often think differently and have different interests than their age-mates. They usually enter school having already developed many basic skills, sometimes to high levels. They have areas of interest that have developed into advanced areas of knowledge (p. 8).
Individual Growth	When the needs of the gifted and talented students are recognized and the educational program is designed to meet their needs, these students make significant gains in achievement, and their sense of competence is enhanced (p. 8).
Societal Benefit	Contributions to society in all areas of human endeavor come in overweighed proportion from gifted individuals (p. 8).

District personnel would benefit from discussing these rationales and determining, based on local values, which perspectives are best suited for establishing gifted and talented education as an integral part of the total educational program their district offers. Having this discussion will assist a district in developing its sense of mission or purpose for gifted and talented education.

Typical Misconceptions About Gifted and Talented Learners

What are some typical misconceptions about gifted and talented learners?

In our society and our schools, we hold a number of beliefs that make it difficult to develop quality programs for gifted and talented learners. Open and honest discussion about these misconceptions is important for fostering the collaborative efforts needed to properly serve students with gifts and talents.

Misconception #1: *All children are gifted and talented.*

Points to Consider: Everyone accepts that all children are unique, special, important, have personal strengths and weaknesses, and have contributions to make to the classroom and ultimately to their communities and to society. However, the term *gifted and talented* refers, under administrative law, to a specific population that has specific educational needs. While almost everyone would agree that every child should have vaccinations to enter a public school, not every child needs insulin injections every day. The latter is based on identified need by a qualified professional. The same would hold true for students with differentiated educational needs.

Misconception #2: *Gifted and talented education is elitist.*

Points to Consider: This misconception comes from the dual nature of the word *elite*. In one sense the word *elite* refers to differences in performance. This is most often used in conjunction with extraordinary athletic performance, as in “an *elite* gymnast.” Very few would argue against providing such athletes with elite-level coaching and training. The same holds true for those who exhibit gifts and talents in other areas, as listed in the official definition provided earlier in this section. Unfortunately, the word *elite* also refers to differences in class. Individuals from upper classes are often stereotyped as being snobbish—considering themselves to be better than other people. This latter sense of the word, based on class, runs counter to the value American society places on equity. In this sense, gifted and talented education seems to be perceived as maintaining existent inequities. However, in the former sense of the word, based on performance, gifted and talented education fosters excellence, another important societal value in America. Indeed, elite treatment based on performance has been one important route for oppressed populations (e.g., economically disadvantaged, ethnic and linguistic minorities) to overcome class differences and to achieve equity goals.

Misconception #3: *Gifted and talented students can make it on their own.*

Points to Consider: This misconception is again based on a divergence of opinion about definitions. When “make it” refers to the likelihood that gifted and talented students will

meet grade level objectives on end-of-year criterion-referenced tests, it is very likely that they will succeed, meeting minimum criteria for adequate yearly progress. So if “make it” refers to a short-term achievement goal, gifted and talented students often do so “on their own.” However, if “make it” refers to a more long-term objective of life success, the misconception simply doesn’t hold. Gifted and talented students are just as much at risk as other populations for suicide, mental illness (probably more so among those who are gifted and talented at creative thinking), juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, and dropping out of school. The greatest concern for gifted and talented learners is underachievement. While estimates vary, most scholars would agree that the majority of gifted and talented students underachieve. The reasons for this are varied and complex—including personal, family, and societal issues. However, one primary cause of underachievement can be laid squarely at the feet of schools—the mismatch between a student’s developmental readiness for challenging work and the educational program he or she is offered. This failure to provide learning experiences based on specific needs of specific students frequently results in a failure of the student to “make it,” where “make it” refers to the realization of the potential the student brought into the school in the first place.

II. Identification

“Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered—either by themselves or others.”
—Mark Twain (cited in ThinkExist, 2006)

The Utah Administrative Rule for Gifted and Talented Education requires that “each district ... have a process for identifying students in one or more areas” as listed in the definition section of the rule. In addition, each district is to have “a process for appropriately placing students identified as gifted and talented” (R277-711-3.B-C).

Characteristics and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students

What are the characteristics and needs of gifted and talented students?

Any process for discovering gifted and talented students begins with an understanding of their characteristics. These characteristics imply certain needs which, in turn, lead to services that meet those needs, as illustrated below.



The chart below, drawn from the work of Dr. Barbara Clark (2008), provides a sample of some of the characteristics of gifted and talented learners, along with their concomitant needs. (Service options are discussed in Section IV of this document.) In reading this chart, it should be remembered that the list is not comprehensive and that an individual gifted and talented child will likely never display all of these characteristics at any one time. Further, a student may show a characteristic in which he or she is particularly strong only most of the time, rather than all the time.

Characteristic	Need
Extraordinary quantity of information (p. 74)	To be exposed to new and challenging information (p. 74)
Unusually varied interests (p. 74)	To be allowed to pursue individual ideas as far as interest takes them (p. 74)
High level of language development (p. 74)	To encounter uses for increasingly difficult vocabulary and concepts (p. 74)
Unusual capacity for processing information (p. 74)	To be exposed to ideas at many levels and in large variety (p. 74)
Flexible thought processes (p. 74)	To be allowed to solve problems in diverse ways (p. 74)
Ability to generate original ideas and solutions (p. 75)	To be given the opportunity to contribute to the solution of meaningful problems (p. 74)
Unusual intensity (p. 75)	To pursue inquiries beyond allotted time spans (p. 75)
Unusual sensitivity to the expectations and feelings of others (p. 76)	To learn to clarify the feelings and expectations of others (p. 76)
Keen sense of humor (p. 76)	To learn how behavior affects the feelings and behavior of others (p. 76)
Heightened self-awareness (p. 76)	To learn to assert own needs and feelings nondefensively (p. 76)
High expectations of self and others (p. 77)	To learn to set realistic goals and to accept setbacks as part of the learning process (p. 77)
Strongly motivated by self-actualization needs (p. 77)	To be given opportunities to follow divergent paths and pursue strong interests (p. 77)
Leadership (p. 77)	To understand various leadership steps and practice leadership skills (p. 77)

Teachers should use check lists such as the chart on page eleven to help them identify the students who require differentiated curriculum and instruction in the regular classroom. More information on this is provided in Section V, “Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.”

In addition, teachers are usually asked to observe students in their classrooms to make referrals for possible inclusion in specific gifted and talented program services. Generally when teachers have not had training in the characteristics of gifted and talented children, they tend to refer students who do well on classroom assignments and who have good behavior. While the characteristics in the chart above are generally stated in a positive fashion, they are sometimes manifested negatively. Further, each characteristic will often have culturally specific ways in which it is shown. Teachers need to be sensitive to these differences as explained in Section VII, “Special Populations.”

Principles of Gifted and Talented Identification

What principles should govern the gifted and talented identification process?

School districts that are most successful in identifying gifted and talented students are generally governed by the following principles:

- Seeking variety in identification by having a clear, inclusive definition of gifted and talented (Callahan, Hunsaker, Adams, Moore, & Bland, 1995; Davis & Rimm, 2004; Richert, 2003).
- Using multiple criteria, not multiple hurdles (Callahan, et al., 1995; Clark, 2008; Davis & Rimm, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 1993).
- Using unique, separate instrumentation for different areas of giftedness and talent (Callahan, et al., 1995; Davis & Rimm, 2004).
- Basing identification and placement on student need, linking identification to the specific services to be offered (Callahan, et al., 1995; Davis & Rimm, 2004).
- Making identification fluid and ongoing (Davis & Rimm, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 1983; Shore, Cornell, Robinson, & Ward, 1991).
- Recognizing that the purpose of identification is to find and develop exceptional potential (Clark, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 1993; Richert, 2003).

Stages of a Formal Gifted and Talented Identification Process

What are the stages of a formal gifted and talented identification process?

There are generally four broad stages for identifying students as gifted and talented. The stages described here should be seen as a skeletal outline only. Details of the stages will vary, and perhaps even overlap, depending on local circumstances, including the scope of

the identification (e.g., school or district level), the type of program (e.g., pull-out or magnet), and the focus of planning (e.g., child or program). Typically, each of the stages is overseen either by a small committee that includes individuals with expertise in gifted and talented education, test interpretation, or school administration, or by a gifted and talented program coordinator.

Stage 1, consists of referral, screening, or nomination. Referral occurs when teachers observe students in their classrooms to suggest who should be further considered in the identification processes. To do this well, teachers usually need training in the state's definition of gifted and talented and the characteristics of gifted and talented learners. The referral usually works best when teachers are given a checklist or rating scale on which to report their observations. Screening involves an inspection of census norm-referenced testing done in the district. Generally a cutoff is set (e.g., the 85th percentile), and any student who meets or exceeds the cutoff on the total battery or a predetermined sub-score (e.g., total reading, total math) is automatically advanced in the process for further consideration. Nomination gives an opportunity for non-educators to recommend students for consideration. Four types of nominations are usually taken: self, peer, parent, and community member. Usually the nominator is asked to provide evidence concerning why the nomination is being made. Some schools formalize this process by requiring the nominator to complete a checklist, rating scale, or open-ended questionnaire.

Stage 2, is the data-gathering stage. At this point in the process, the committee or coordinator will review the records of all students whose names were received from Stage 1. Applying a specific set of criteria—usually a *preponderance of evidence* standard is set; sometimes specific cutoffs are used—a determination is made about whom to gather further information on. Parental permission is obtained; then the needed information is gathered through additional testing, observation, or other means. This stage is necessary for at least two reasons. First, gathering additional information is not an inexpensive proposition, so it is important to expend scarce resources where they are most likely to be well used. Second, it is important, in the name of fairness, to make sure that the data on each student is as equivalent as possible. (This does not imply that data gathered must necessarily be identical for each child.)

Stage 3, decision making, begins once all the data is gathered. At this stage, the data are usually synthesized in some fashion and a decision is reached regarding services for the child. Several data synthesis methods have been employed by school districts, including matrix displays, case study summaries, admissions formulas, and statistical analyses. There is not space to describe each of these here. Exploring the possibilities mentioned here with experienced gifted leaders or experts is strongly recommended. However, in developing decision-making strategies, it is important to remember that any system used has its advantages and disadvantages.

Stage 4, service planning, requires that a specific course of action be taken relative to the student's participation in various service options. The most basic action taken at this stage is placement in a specific service, such as a magnet classroom or pull-out program. Beyond this, information gained through the identification process should be used to make recommendations to teachers about how a child's learning experiences may be differentiated, regardless of placement. In any case, parents must be informed, usually by

letter, of the specific actions to be taken (e.g., placement or not) and, perhaps, of recommendations for differentiation.

Errors in Identification

What can be done about errors that may have occurred during the identification process?

There are two types of errors that can occur in the identification process: false negatives and false positives. A false negative occurs when a student who should have been identified as gifted and talented was not. A false positive occurs when a student has been incorrectly identified as gifted and talented.

The most broadly accepted means of dealing with false negatives is the establishment of an appeals process, usually supervised by an appeals committee or officer. When parents or teachers are notified that a child is not eligible for a specific service, the parents or teachers are often given the right to appeal this decision. The appeal is required to be made in writing, with evidence of why the initial decision may have been in error. The committee or officer reviews the evidence provided to determine whether a compelling case can be made. If the case is compelling, additional information is gathered. This often entails retesting, different testing, or further observation. Once the additional information is gathered, the criteria for eligibility for the specific service are again applied, and parents and teachers are informed of the decision.

A potential false positive comes to light when a student placed in a certain service does not do well within that service, as observed by the student, parents/caregivers, or teachers. The fact of not doing well does not automatically mean that a false positive has occurred. Consultation among the student, parents, teachers, and gifted and talented education leaders should occur to determine what may be causing the student's lack of performance. Adjustments should then be made to what is required of the student within the program, given that differentiation is just as important within gifted and talented programs as it is in the general education program. For a predetermined period of time, usually dictated by district policy, careful notes of any meetings, adjustments made for the student, and changes in the student's performance are recorded. All the records are reviewed, and a determination is made as to whether or not the student should continue in the program.

Best Instruments for Gifted and Talented Identification

What are the best instruments to use in gifted and talented identification?

While there is no single "best instrument" to use in gifted and talented identification processes, there are some instruments that are more typically used, and there are some general guidelines for selecting instruments. Utah Administrative Rule R277-711-3.B requires the use of "at least three assessment instruments," and further states that "these instruments shall not be solely dependent upon English vocabulary or comprehension

skills and shall take into consideration abilities of culturally diverse, handicapped and underachieving students.” Thus it is clear that instruments used must be culturally fair, and be used in culturally sensitive ways. Biases in both the instruments and the people making decisions should be minimized. In addition, instruments used should be valid (i.e., measuring what they purport to measure), reliable (i.e., being consistent across time, place, and other conditions), and useful (i.e., generating data that can be interpreted in a way that assists decision making). Further, whatever instruments are used within an identification system must be matched to the specific program for which the student is being identified.

Typical instruments used in the identification process include:

- Standardized creativity instruments (e.g., Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking).
- Teacher rating scales (e.g., Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students, Gifted Evaluation Scale).
- Standardized group achievement tests (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Stanford Achievement Test 10).
- Standardized group aptitude tests (e.g., Cognitive Abilities Test, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, Naglieri Non-verbal Aptitude Test).
- Standardized individual achievement tests (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement).
- Standardized individual aptitude tests (e.g., Wechsler Intelligence Scales for Children IV, Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales V).

In addition, some districts have developed unique protocols that call for more qualitative assessment of questionnaires, interviews, videotapes, portfolios, performances, and products. Of course, any instrument developed locally should be investigated to determine its qualities of fairness, validity, reliability, and usefulness.

III. Program Standards

“Until every gifted child can attend a school where the brightest are appropriately challenged in an environment with their intellectual peers, America can't claim that it's leaving no child behind.”

—Jan and Bob Davidson with Laura Vanderkam (2005, p. 125)

Program standards, as stated in the Utah Administrative Rule R277-711-3, are essential for providing appropriate services for gifted and talented students. These standards inform districts of the necessary components for implementing and maintaining gifted and talented programs.

Legal Basis for Gifted and Talented Education in Utah

What is the legal basis for gifted and talented education in Utah?

Utah Administrative Rule R277-711 outlines definitions, authority and purpose, and program and fiscal standards for implementing a gifted and talented program. “Programs for gifted and talented students’ means differentiated and challenging educational programs designed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in one or more identified areas” (R277-711-1.F). The entire rule is provided in Appendix A.

Program Standards for Gifted and Talented Education in Utah

What are the program standards for gifted and talented education in Utah?

Administrative Rule R277-711-3 delineates for districts the program standards necessary for a successful and legally sufficient gifted and talented program. These standards direct districts to have appropriately qualified people directing and implementing a gifted and talented program; to identify students with a minimum of three assessment instruments; to appropriately place identified students; to submit a plan for review to the State Office of Education; to provide a plan for staff development and support; and to evaluate the success of individual program elements. This law means that districts are mandated to have gifted and talented programs. In addition, the rule provides fiscal standards in R277-711-4. These are discussed at length in Section IX, “Leadership.”

Submitting an Annual Gifted and Talented Plan to the USOE

How is the required annual gifted and talented plan to be sent to the State Office of Education prepared and submitted?

Administrative Rule R277-711-3.D states that “each school district shall develop and submit, to the Utah State Office of Education for review annually, a plan for educating gifted and talented students.” Careful consideration of the program standards as outlined

in the state rule will direct the preparation of the plan. “A written philosophy for the education of gifted and talented students ... consistent with the goals and values of the school district and the community” (R277-711-D(1)) is the basis for a district’s plan. Required components of the plan include identification, articulated curricula, teaching strategies that are appropriate for gifted and talented students, guidance to address students’ personal and interpersonal needs, information regarding special services for students, and staff development for educators. In addition, the plan asks for optional information such as student demographics, teacher endorsements, and program budget allocations. Plans are to be submitted through the Consolidated Utah Student Achievement Plan (commonly known as CUSAP, found at <http://usoe.iassessment.org> or see Appendix B for the Gifted and Talented Plan Template). Eligibility for receiving gifted and talented funds is contingent upon USOE approval of the annual plan.

Essential Components of a Gifted and Talented Program

What are the essential components of a gifted and talented program?

Gifted and talented education professionals from across Utah have outlined five essential components that, when used together with the state rule, provide a framework for a successful gifted and talented program. If any of these components are missing, the likelihood of the program having a positive impact on gifted and talented learners is diminished. The components are:

- a. Identification: Using at least three appropriate assessment measures (as stated in the Utah Administrative Rule, see Appendix A).
- b. Peer Association: Allowing identified gifted and talented students full or frequent opportunities to work together to meet their academic and affective needs.
- c. Content Differentiation: Providing depth, complexity, and acceleration commensurate with the abilities of the identified gifted and talented students.
- d. Differentiated Instruction: Using a variety of strategies that are recognized as being effective with gifted and talented students.
- e. Pacing: Appropriately and flexibly altering the rate of teaching, learning, and thinking to meet the needs of identified gifted and talented students.

Other Existing Standards

What other standards exist for developing and implementing a gifted and talented program?

A task force representing many constituent groups in gifted and talented education and representing diverse geographic areas of the United States was commissioned by NAGC to develop national standards for gifted and talented programs. From the work of that task force, the document *Aiming for Excellence: Gifted Program Standards* was published in 1998. The NAGC standards are based on best practices in gifted and talented education and identify seven “critical and essential criteria of gifted education programming” (Landrum, Callahan, and Shaklee, 2001, p. xii), namely: curriculum and instruction, program administration or management, program design, program evaluation, socio-emotional guidance and counseling, professional development, and student identification. Within each criterion a guiding principle is delineated, along with minimum standards requisite for acceptable gifted and talented programs and exemplary standards needed to achieve excellence in programming (see Appendix C). Program standards at both the state and national level help districts understand the qualities of a successful gifted and talented program. Groups of individuals can become knowledgeable of the standards through study by district task forces, planning or advisory committees, and individuals. Evaluating existing programs with the standards gives credibility to a district’s program and the knowledge that gifted and talented students are being served in an appropriate way.

Adopting a Gifted and Talented Education Policy

How does a school district develop and adopt a gifted and talented education policy?

Meeting the needs of all students is inherent in most if not all district mission statements. The first step in establishing gifted and talented education policy is recognizing that there are students in our schools and classrooms with advanced cognitive abilities who have different needs, and that meeting these needs is part of meeting the needs of all students. The U.S. Department of Education’s report *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent* (1993), a report documenting the lack of challenge in school curricula for gifted and talented students, provides a rationale for districts and school boards to develop a gifted and talented education policy. Networking with other districts through the state gifted and talented coordinators’ meeting provides support for districts getting started in gifted and talented education. Samples of adopted policy statements could be gathered from this group. In general, a good policy statement would define “who gifted and talented children are, why gifted and talented programs are necessary, one or two overarching program goals, and a clear message about the district’s commitment to meeting the learning needs of these students” (Purcell and Eckert, 2006, p. 16). Typically, a draft policy would be prepared by a committee of district educators and patrons. The draft statement would then be submitted to the local board of education using the district protocol.

IV. Service Options

“Gifted students are part of the developmental continuum of learners, all whom have specialized needs, as well as shared needs.”

—Carol Ann Tomlinson, Mary Ruth Coleman, Susan Allan, Anne Udall, and Mary Landrum (2004, p. 5)

Required Service Options for an Effective Gifted and Talented Program

What service options are required for an effective gifted and talented program?

Local school districts should offer multiple service options along a continuum, since no one single option can meet diverse student needs. A continuum of services is much more complex and challenging than a fixed, “one-size-fits-all” program.

Utah Administrative Rule R277-711-1.F articulates, ““Programs for gifted and talented students’ means differentiated and challenging educational programs designed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in one or more areas identified in Section 1(B).” Section 3 requires that “each school district shall have a process for *appropriately placing* students identified as gifted and talented” (R277-71-3.C, emphasis added). Contained in the description of the required annual district plan (R277-711-1.D) are detailed criteria for providing services for gifted and talented students (see Appendix B).

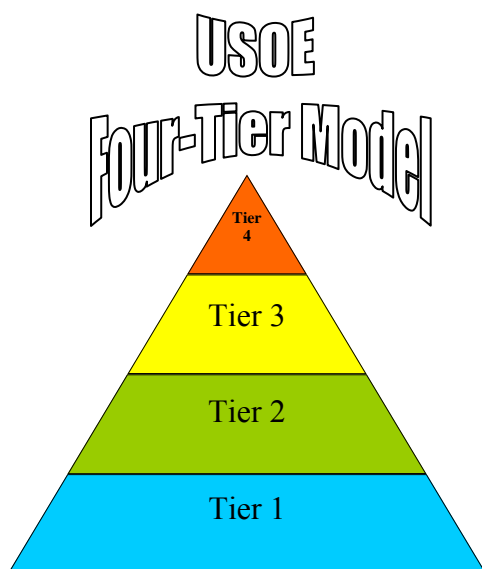
Four of the five essential components for gifted and talented programs identified by Utah gifted and talented education professionals deal directly with providing services for gifted and talented learners. (These components are fully identified and explained in Section III, “Program Standards.”)

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC, 1998) standard on program design states, “The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.” One of the guiding principles asserts, “Rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners” (Table I. see Appendix C).

Continuum of Service Options

What continuum of service options could be used in a school or district?

A continuum involves a wide array of services or opportunities that respond to students’ unique strengths, talents, and interests. These opportunities need to be organized in a purposeful way. One approach to utilize when describing the continuum is to consider these questions: (1) What services would be appropriate for *all* students? (2) What services would be appropriate for *many* students? (3) What services would be appropriate for *some* students? (4) What services would be appropriate for *few* students? The USOE four-tier model for gifted and talented instruction provides examples of the services that might be incorporated at each stage of this continuum.



Utah's Four-Tier Model for Gifted and Talented Instruction

The Utah's Four-Tier Model of Gifted and Talented Instruction provides a process for delivering comprehensive, quality instruction for all students, from kindergarten through high school. The model is designed to provide research-based instruction and targeted interventions that lead to student achievement. The model consists of four tiers, or levels, of instruction: Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 and Tier 4.

Tier 1: Appropriate and challenging content, process, and products for *all students*. Instruction in foundational knowledge, skills, and tools for thoughtful, self-directed learning (e.g., flexible instructional grouping, open-ended assignments), exposure to a variety of enrichment experiences (e.g., field trips, guest speakers).

Tier 2: Individual or small group exploration within areas of strength or interest beyond the required Core Curriculum for *many students*. Instruction in more complex knowledge, skills, and tools for thoughtful, self-directed learning (e.g., problem-based learning, future studies, debate, competitions), exposure to more focused enrichment or inquiry experiences (e.g., compacting, contracting).

Tier 3: Specialized classes, independent study, specialized programs (offered by the school or outside agencies) for *some students*. Instruction in more sophisticated knowledge, skills, and tools requiring guidance from individuals with specialized training in working with gifted and talented students and/or the specialized content area (e.g., pull-out programs, cluster classrooms, self-contained classroom, honors classes, concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate).

Tier 4: Targeted, custom-planned or designed responses to the individual student's needs for a *few students*. Individualized instruction through advanced, high-level, sustained services often involving cooperation of multiple educational settings (e.g., radical acceleration, early entrance to high school or college) or connections with community resources (e.g., individual advisement, magnet programs, mentorships, internships). These options must be coordinated by individuals who know the student well, comprehend the academic and emotional demands of the student's areas of interest, and understand the cognitive and social-emotional issues of gifted and talented learners.

At all points along the continuum of services, challenging, worthwhile educational experiences must be tied to the individual student's learning profile. Of course, those who teach at each point along the continuum must be qualified for the type of services they are providing. A regular classroom teacher who has been trained in differentiation for gifted and talented students could provide services such as basic differentiation, flexible instructional grouping, and independent study options. Those whose responsibility may include teaching in a pullout program, magnet school, magnet classroom, or honors class should hold a gifted and talented endorsement—just as any teacher who teaches a specifically identified subpopulation is expected to hold an appropriate endorsement (e.g., ESL, reading, or special education). A teacher involved in instructing students in AP, IB, dual enrollment or early college enrollment should have received training and be able to demonstrate competencies specific not only to the content of those advanced courses, but to the needs of the students they will be teaching.

The challenge for a district is not necessarily in the selection of specific services, but in asking the five questions posed by Treffinger, Young, Nassab, and Wittig (2004):

1. What services and opportunities do we already have in place? What are our programming positives?
2. What services and opportunities might be added? What is our wish list?
3. Of the services and opportunities now available, which ones might readily be developed? What are our immediate "opportunity areas"?
4. In what ways might we expand our provisions we offer during the next 3-5 years?
5. How might we ensure that we are doing the best possible job of "linking" these options with the students who benefit from them? (p. 30)

Aligning Services with Identification

How are services aligned with identification?

Rather than making sure that services align with identification, the broader issue is ensuring alignment throughout your school's or district's efforts to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. A school or district wishing to begin the process of building or improving a gifted and talented program should start with a needs assessment of the current degree to which student needs are being met. The next step is to clearly articulate a mission or philosophy statement and a definition of giftedness and talent, both of which must be based on current state rules and regulations, theoretical models, and best practices. From this statement and definition, a school or district would then create identification procedures and broad program goals. A continuum of services for student placement based on student identification and program goals would next be designed. Finally, a program evaluation would be derived from program goals in order to determine if, and to what degree, those goals were being met. A school or district with an existing program should also periodically check for this alignment (i.e., mission or philosophy statements → definition of giftedness and talent → identification procedures → program goals → continuum of services → program evaluation). The individuals involved in creating or reviewing this type of comprehensive program for gifted and talented learners should represent a variety of stakeholder groups and be qualified with a strong background in both theory and best practices in gifted and talented education.

Relationship of Programs to General Education

What should be the relationship of gifted and talented programs to the general education program?

According to NAGC standards, “Gifted education programming must evolve from a comprehensive and sound base” (NAGC, 1998, Table 3; see Appendix C). This is illustrated in the continuum of services triangle shown above, as well as the discussion of program alignment in the following section. The NAGC standards further state, “Gifted education programming services must be an integral part of the general education school day. ... Gifted services must be designed to supplement and build on the basic academic skills and knowledge learned in regular classrooms at all grade levels to ensure continuity as students progress through the program” (NAGC, 1998, Table 3; see Appendix C). In sum, gifted and talented education services should never be used to compensate for a weak general education program. Building or improving gifted and talented education implies building or improving general education, and vice versa.

Differentiation, Enrichment, and Acceleration

What are differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration?

Differentiation refers to the need to tailor instructional practices to create appropriately different learning experiences for different—in this case, gifted and talented—students. The four areas typically addressed through differentiation are content, process, product, and learning environment.

Enrichment refers to program organization that extends, supplements, and sometimes replaces learning experiences students typically go through. The emphasis is generally on keeping students with their age peers, but fostering the development of higher cognitive and affective processes.

Acceleration refers to program organization in which the learner completes coursework earlier or in less time than ordinarily expected. Acceleration might occur as students complete coursework within a specific subject more rapidly, skip one or more grade levels, or move from one school to the next earlier than usual. (In Utah, early entrance into a public school kindergarten is not permitted by law.)

While differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration have been defined as separate concepts, they are closely interrelated. For example, differentiating by permitting a student to independently study a topic of interest will certainly be enriching for that student, but will also likely expose the student to advanced material in the topic area that is normally not studied at that student’s age, thus becoming an acceleration experience. In fact, most often the best learning experiences for gifted and talented students will not focus on differentiation, enrichment, or acceleration in isolation, but on using the three in concert.

V. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

“Not every child has an equal talent or an equal ability or equal motivation, but children have the equal right to develop their talent, their ability, and their motivation.”

—John F. Kennedy (cited in Westberg and Archambault, 2004, p. 74)

Relationship Between the Utah Core Curriculum Gifted Curricula

What is the relationship between the Utah Core Curriculum and a curriculum for the gifted and talented?

Action by the Utah State Board of Education in January 1984 established policy requiring the identification of specific Core Curriculum standards that must be completed by all students K-12 as a requisite for graduation from Utah’s secondary schools. The Core Curriculum represents those standards of learning that are essential for all students. They are the ideas, concepts, and skills that provide a foundation on which subsequent learning may be built. The core should be taught with respect for differences in learning styles, learning rates, and individual capabilities, without losing sight of common goals. Teachers should take a developmental perspective when addressing specific student needs.

Although the Core Curriculum standards are intended to serve as the foundation for planning students’ learning experiences, they are not the total curriculum of a level or course. Gifted and talented students need to be assessed by teachers to determine which Core Curriculum standards they already know and understand. Through curriculum compacting, teachers use assessments to determine student proficiency in core content and skills, plan how the student will achieve core objectives not yet mastered, and design experiences the students can participate in to extend their learning. It is important, most of all, that gifted and talented students be given appropriate challenges at their level of ability (see Section IV, “Service Options”). This means that learning experiences related to the Core Curriculum may need to be adjusted to meet the specific needs of a specific student.

Basic Principles of Curriculum Differentiation

When might a specialized curriculum for gifted and talented learners be needed?

A specialized curriculum is called for when gifted and talented students are grouped together for instruction in administrative arrangements such as magnet schools, self-contained classrooms, or cluster groupings. According to Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska and her colleagues from the College of William and Mary, “Curriculum development for the gifted is a long-term process that involves adaptation of the current curriculum, infusion of extant research-based curricula for the gifted, and the development of new curriculum” (VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh, 2006, p. 32). This process results in a formal written

curriculum that is widely disseminated and that can serve as an adjunct to the Core Curriculum. Further, VanTassel-Baska and her colleagues have stated, "Curriculum for the gifted should be differentiated at all levels of design, including the goals of the lessons, the outcomes required of students, the activities and projects in which students engage, the strategies educators employ, the materials used, and the assessments to measure progress" (p. 80). Thus, teachers should begin with the core objectives for their curriculum; identify potential themes, ideas, or generalizations that can be used as overarching concepts; and then shape the goals, outcomes, activities, strategies, materials, and assessments so they are responsive to each gifted and talented learner's need for challenge.

What are the basic principles of curriculum differentiation?

When gifted and talented students are placed in regular classrooms, a specialized curriculum may not be necessary, but differentiation is still required. Even in a classroom with a specialized curriculum, differentiation is needed.

The curriculum committee of the National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented (Passow, 1982) developed seven guiding principles for curriculum differentiation.

1. The content of curricula for gifted students should focus on and be organized to include more elaborate, complex, and in-depth study of major ideas, problems, and themes that integrate knowledge within and across systems of thought.
2. Curricula for gifted students should allow for the development and application of productive thinking skills to enable students to reconceptualize existing knowledge and/or generate new knowledge.
3. Curricula for gifted students should enable them to explore constantly changing knowledge and information, and develop the attitude that knowledge is worth pursuing in an open world.
4. Curricula for gifted students should encourage exposure to, selection, and use of appropriate and specialized resources.
5. Curricula for gifted students should promote self-initiated and self-directed learning and growth.
6. Curricula for gifted students should provide for the development of self-understanding and the understanding of one's relationship to persons, societal institutions, nature, and culture.
7. Evaluations of curricula for gifted students should be conducted in accordance with the previously stated principles, stressing higher-level thinking skills, creativity, and excellence in performance and products.

According to VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh (2006), “Gifted students must encounter a curriculum that differs in the level of depth, complexity, challenge, creativity, abstractness, and accelerative opportunities provided” (p. 85). As further stated by Berger (n.d.), “Developing curriculum that is sufficiently rigorous, challenging, and coherent for students who are gifted is a challenging task. The result, however, is well worth the effort. Appropriately differentiated curriculum produces well-educated, knowledgeable students who have had to work very hard, have mastered a substantial body of knowledge, and can think clearly and critically about that knowledge. Achieving such results for one or for a classroom full of students who are gifted will produce high levels of satisfaction, not only for the students who are beneficiaries, but also for every teacher who is willing to undertake the task” (p. 13).

Necessary Content Modifications for Gifted and Talented Students

What are the necessary content modifications for gifted and talented students?

“Content consists of facts, descriptive information, concepts, ideas, generalizations, principles and rules that are presented to learners” (Illinois State Board of Education, n.d., p. 5). Maker and Nielson (1996) have suggested the following as needed modifications to make curriculum content appropriate for gifted and talented learners:

- Abstraction—going beyond the facts and the obvious to the conceptual framework, underlying ideas, symbolism, and hidden meanings of the content.
- Complexity—posing more challenging questions or situations that force the learner to deal with the intricacies of the content.
- Organization—selecting new arrangements of content (e.g., functional similarities, categorical groups, descriptive similarities) in place of the typical chronological organization.

A number of models are available that can assist teachers in developing appropriate curriculum content for gifted and talented learners. These include:

- Bruner’s Basic Structure of a Discipline (Maker & Nielson, 1995).
- Curry and Samara’s Curriculum Project (Connell, 2003).
- Differentiation by Depth and Complexity (Kaplan, 2005).
- Gilligan’s Theory of Moral Reasoning (Leroux, 1986).
- Junior Great Books (Criscuola, 1994).
- Kohlberg’s Moral Reasoning (Maker & Nielson, 1995).
- Multiple Menu Model (Renzulli, Leppien, & Hays, 2000).
- Parallel Curriculum (Tomlinson, Kaplan, Renzulli, Purcell, Leppien, & Burns, 2002).
- Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).
- Integrated Curriculum Model (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2006).

Differentiating the Learning Process for Gifted and Talented Students

How can the learning processes be differentiated for gifted and talented students?

“Process is the presentation of content, including the learning activities for students, the questions which are asked, as well as the teaching methods and thinking skills used” (Illinois State Board of Education, n.d., p. 5). Maker and Nielson (1996) have suggested the follow process modifications:

- Higher Levels of Thinking—emphasizing questions that enable the learner to analyze, synthesize, or evaluate.
- Open-endedness—asking questions that promote critical and creative thinking.
- Inquiry—providing opportunities for the learner to arrive at self-drawn conclusions or generalizations.
- Inductive and deductive reasoning—asking the learner to cite the sources, clues given, and logic used in drawing conclusions.
- Freedom of choice—providing opportunities for self-directed activities as independent study.
- Group interactions/simulations—using structured simulations for group problem solving.
- Variety—encouraging a variety of teaching strategies.
- Pacing—adjusting the rate at which content is presented, extending time and deadlines so that further integration of ideas may take place, or shortening the amount of time for completion.
- Independent learning skills—providing students the tools they need in order to successfully complete independent study projects (e.g. organization, research, problem solving, communication, and/or study skills).

Models that can assist teachers in making appropriate instructional modifications for gifted and talented learners include the following:

- Creative Problem-Solving (Treffinger, Isaksen, & Dorval, 2000)
- Guilford’s Structure of Intellect (Meeker & Meeker, 1986)
- Taba’s Teaching Strategies Program (Maker & Nielson, 1995)
- Talents Unlimited (Schlicter, 1986) built on the work of Dr. Calvin W. Taylor (1986)
- Taxonomies of Cognitive and Affective Objectives posited by Bloom and his colleagues (Maker & Nielson, 1995)
- Thinking Skills (Costa, 2001)
- Problem-based Learning (Stepien & Gallagher, 1993)
- Treffinger’s Self-Directed Learning (Maker & Nielson, 1995).

In addition, models listed as resources for content differentiation may also be helpful here.

Product Differentiation

How do we differentiate products for gifted and talented students?

“Products are the outcomes of instruction, whether tangible or intangible, complex or unsophisticated” (Illinois State Board of Education, p. 6). Products for gifted and talented learners should be as close to professional as possible, given the developmental capabilities of the learner. According to Maker and Nielson (1996), appropriate modifications include:

- Real problems—exposure to questions or problems investigated by professionals appropriate to the discipline.
- Real audiences—encouragement to develop products directed toward an audience of “professionals” or “experts” in that discipline.
- Product evaluation—combination of teacher assessment using pre-established criteria with pupil self-evaluation and evaluation by a “real audience.”
- Transformations—development of student products which are beyond mere summarization of the concepts presented, i.e., reinterpretation, elaboration, extension, and synthesis.

In addition to models already listed for modifications in content and process, models that can be useful in developing differentiated products or assessments include:

- Amabile’s Consensual Assessment Technique (Starko, 2005).
- Creative Product Assessment Matrix (Bessemmer & O’Quinn, 1986).
- Triad Enrichment (Renzulli, 1977), Student Product Assessment Form (Renzulli & Reis, 1997).

Modifying the Learning Environment for Gifted and Talented Students

How do we modify the learning environment for gifted and talented students?

“Learning environment is the setting in which learning occurs, and it may be both physical and psychological. In modifying the setting, the characteristics, strengths and preferences of the learner must be considered” (Illinois State Board of Education, p. 6). Environmental modifications suggested by Maker and Nielson (1996) include:

- Classroom atmosphere—teachers must develop an atmosphere which will allow for openness and acceptance of individual differences.
- Grouping—instructional groupings must be varied to meet the unique educational needs of academically gifted and talented students.
- Peer association—opportunities must be provided for gifted and talented students to interact with their intellectual peers as well as their chronological peers (see Section IV, “Service Options”).

Elements of Effective Assessment and Instructional Decisions

What are the elements of effective assessment, and how are they used to make instructional decisions regarding gifted and talented students?

Pre-Assessment

Pre-assessment is any method, strategy, or process used to determine a student's current level of readiness or interest in order to plan for appropriate instruction. Pre-assessment:

- Provides data and information that can determine learning options or levels for students in a differentiated classroom.
- Helps teachers understand the nature of learning differences in his/her students before planning instruction.
- Allows students to demonstrate mastery, indicating the need for compacting, or to show where remediation might be needed before instruction begins.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is conducted by educators to determine the effects of instructional activities in order to make decisions about what needs to be done next for a student. This type of assessment is often done during actual teaching of lessons or monitoring of independent practice, though it may also be done when teachers reflect upon their most recent teaching day. Formative assessment:

- Provides data about whether or not students understand assigned tasks and can complete them successfully.
- Permits teachers to make adjustments to assignments or lessons to better challenge gifted and talented students or to better meet their particular learning needs.
- Encourages short-term planning that is responsive to current student performance.

While they are useful for all students, it is imperative that authentic assessment opportunities be provided for gifted and talented students as one form of formative assessment. This implies that daily tasks and short-term and long-term projects demanded of gifted and talented students reflect the actual knowledge and skills used by professionals in the field to the degree possible given the developmental level of the student. Assessment of such tasks can be done through performance assessments that include portfolios, rubrics, and opportunities for self-evaluation.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is done when student performance data is summarized for communication to interested audiences, including the student, her or his parents, other school personnel, funding bodies, and the general public. Summaries can be given at the student, teacher, school, and district levels and beyond. The most familiar summations of performance beyond the student level are reports of standardized achievement test results. These types of reports can be used to identify specific areas of the curriculum or specific populations of students who are achieving curricular school goals or not. For gifted and

talented populations, it is often useful to determine the number of students who continually score near the ceiling of a test. This can be an indicator of the inappropriateness of curricular and instructional approaches typically being applied in the general classroom.

The most typical form of summative assessment provided at the student level is grades. Grading of gifted students can often be troubling. If students are completing work above grade level, should the grades communicate how the student might have performed on a grade-level curriculum, or should it communicate how the student performed on the actual work completed? The most fair approach is often to produce a dual report on which the student outcomes according to grade level objectives are reported, with a supplemental report provided indicating performance on actual above-grade-level work. At the secondary level, some high schools weight grades so that student grade point averages not only reflect the students' performance in a class, but also reflect the rigor of the course being taken.

VI. Social and Emotional Needs

“It is time to ask others to listen to us. It is time to say clearly: bright kids are not better, yet they are different; and because they are, they face different issues.”

—Pat Schuler (2003, p. 1)

The social and emotional development of gifted and talented students has recently been brought to the forefront in the field of gifted and talented education. Parents, teachers, and administrators realize that they must not only attend to these students’ intellectual academic needs, but also understand the unique social and emotional characteristics these students exhibit. Intellectual, social, and emotional needs must be considered in order to gain an understanding, not just about these students varied characteristics, but also in designing programs and curriculum that is appropriate for them.

Definition of Social and Emotional Development

What is the definition of social and emotional development?

Dr. Nancy M. Robinson (2002) shares that “there is no more varied group of young people than the diverse group known as gifted children and adolescents. Not only do they come from every walk of life, every ethnic and socioeconomic group, and every nation, but they also exhibit an almost unlimited range of personal characteristics in temperament, risk taking and conservatism, introversion and extroversion, reticence and assertiveness, and degree of effort invested in reaching goals” (p. xi). While this list could appear at first glance to be somewhat contradictory, it is important to note that when we talk about social and emotional needs, just as with the regular population, no gifted and talented child is exactly like another. Social and emotional development from the psychologist’s perspective refers to how we develop the basic understandings relating to self and others. How do we learn to build our own emotional schema from which we relate to our world—and how do we, in turn, use that emotional point of view to relate to the world in which we live?

Developmental Differences for Gifted and Talented Students

How does social and emotional development differ for gifted and talented learners?

Because of their high abilities (e.g., the ability to understand concepts not typically considered by their age-level peers), gifted and talented students’ development may differ from that of their peers. This developmental discrepancy may put gifted and talented students “out of synch” with school structures, social groups, and other contexts designed for students of average ability (Robinson, 2002). Sometimes, because gifted and talented students appear to be able to understand complex ideas and master curricula at a rapid rate, teachers assume that they are also more mature in their interpersonal and intrapersonal development. This is not always the case. In fact, it would appear that gifted and talented students may face both social and emotional challenges caused by the

discrepancy between their advanced cognitive abilities and their vulnerability toward psychosocial problems (Fiedler, 1993; Morelock, 1992; Silverman, 1993b). This *asynchronous* development results when the cognitive, emotional, and physical development is uneven, and may cause frustration or other behavioral manifestations.

Asynchronous Development

How does asynchronous development affect gifted and talented students?

While there is no greater incidence of social and emotional adjustment problems in the gifted population than in the general population, both positive and negative results have been noted regarding asynchronous development in gifted and talented students. Gross (2002) found that moderately gifted and talented students display positive social and emotional adjustment. Benbow (1990) found that moderately gifted and talented students were viewed by themselves and others as being more popular, more socially active and were more socially valued than were the extremely gifted and talented. Some extremely gifted and talented students face both social and emotional challenges, and may be at risk for developing psychosocial difficulties when placed in the regular classroom with age-level peers.

Perfectionism

What is perfectionism, and are all gifted and talented students perfectionists?

Students who exhibit perfectionism may worry excessively about assignments, attempting to do the work over and over to make it more presentable to the teacher, or avoiding the work altogether. These students may suffer a great deal if they feel that they do not live up to the expectations of others, and fear that others will find them inadequate. The focus of their attention is their own imperfections. They may magnify their flaws and overlook their strengths, thereby providing a distorted image of their own existence. The foundation of their self-concept is weak and is easily shaken by external events. They may also have a great need for self-affirmation and validation from others.

Not all gifted and talented students are perfectionists. The degree of perfectionism that any one individual may manifest varies. Some gifted and talented students are accused of being perfectionists or of being too perfectionistic because their own expectations are not congruent with their abilities. This has often been portrayed as a negative characteristic, and for some students being too perfectionistic may be an impediment to their success in the classroom.

What can teachers do about perfectionism?

It is important for teachers to understand that not all perfectionism is bad. Striving for excellence sometimes requires a degree of perfectionism. It is when perfectionistic behaviors interfere with the children's success in school or affect their social and

emotional well-being that actions may have to be taken to help the student. Counselors or other professionals may need to provide guidance in helping students understand the difference between wanting to do their best at what they are trying to accomplish and making something *perfect*. Schuler (2002) suggested:

1. Being cautious about viewing perfectionism as unhealthy.
2. Helping gifted and talented students take pleasure in their accomplishments.
3. Assisting them in viewing their setbacks as learning opportunities.
4. Praising them for their efforts and determination, rather than for being smart or talented.
5. Encouraging them to channel their efforts into things they enjoy rather than trying to do everything at a level of excellence.

Underachievement

What is underachievement, and are all gifted and talented students underachievers?

If underachievement is defined as not performing up to potential, then many if not all gifted and talented children are underachievers, since they are often in classrooms that do not offer the challenge necessary to achieve that potential (Winner, 1996). However, most educators have an image of underachievers as students who dawdle, forget homework, daydream, talk too much to other children, have poor study skills, are slow and perfectionistic, are sloppy and careless, or don't do the work at all (Rimm, 1995). By this definition, not all gifted and talented students are underachievers. Underachievement is considered by many educators to be "a discrepancy between a child's school performance and some ability index" (Delisle & Galbraith, 2002, p. 169). Siegle and McCoach (2005) pinpoint four potential causes of underachievement: a physical, cognitive or emotional issue (e.g., a learning disability or family trauma); a mismatch between the school environment and the student (e.g., lack of challenge in the curriculum); a student's attitude about himself or herself and school (e.g., a fear of failure or a lack of self-confidence); or poor study skills and self-regulation. Counselors often find that underachievement can also relate to a need for attention or a need for control (Colangelo, 2003).

What can teachers do about underachievement?

Underachievement is as varied and complex as a classroom of students. Causes of underachievement are specific to the individual child, so intervention and remediation should also be specific to that child. Nevertheless, a study of students who had reversed their pattern of underachievement identified the teacher as being one of the most important factors in motivating them to achieve. Characteristics of the teacher listed by the students as important were as follows: someone who had a genuine caring for the student; someone who was willing to communicate with the student by talking about interests, ideas and personal concerns; someone who was enthusiastic about the subject taught and exhibited a desire to learn more; and someone flexible in his or her teaching style, who used a variety of resources and methods (Emerick, 1992). The National

Research Center for Gifted and Talented, in a study on increasing the academic achievement of underachievers, found four characteristics that students need to improve their achievement: (1) a belief in their ability to do well (known as self-efficacy); (2) a perception that required tasks are meaningful (known as task value); (3) an expectation that success is possible (known as environmental perception); and (4) the implementation of strategies that will lead to successful completion of the task (known as self-regulation) (Siegle and McCoach, 2000). To begin to help an underachiever, teachers should gain a better understanding of the student through collaboration with parents, focus on the student's strengths and interests, and develop an individual plan for the student based on individual needs. Underachievement in gifted and talented programs should not generally disqualify students, but should be used as an impetus for modification of services, both within and outside the program, that the student should be receiving to increase the likelihood of success. Gifted programs are a need, not a privilege.

Other Social and Emotional Issues

What are other social and emotional issues gifted and talented students face?

According to Delisle and Galbraith (2002), there are a number of social and emotional issues that many gifted and talented students especially face. These include being more responsive to sensory stimuli (e.g., sound, light, smell), perceiving greater complexity in the world around them (e.g., patterns, beauty), and experiencing greater worry about ethical concerns (e.g., justice, environment). This heightened awareness or sensitivity is a particular concern for gifted and talented students who lack the social or emotional maturity to cope, or do not have sufficient knowledge or skill to develop and implement solutions. When gifted and talented students are affected by these issues, the students should not generally be dismissed from gifted and talented programs. Rather, these issues should serve as a springboard to focused lessons, services, or counseling within the programs.

Facilitating Social and Emotional Development

How can teachers generally facilitate their gifted and talented students' social and emotional development?

It is important, first of all, that teachers understand and appreciate the unique intellectual, social and emotional characteristics of gifted and talented students. The education of parents and teachers regarding the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students is important in helping these students understand themselves, understand the world in which they live, and develop appropriate social and emotional skills. In addition, depending on the age or maturity level of the students, they may also benefit by knowing about the asynchronous development, perfectionism, underachievement and other challenges experienced by gifted and talented individuals. Gifted and talented students need instruction that is designed to meet their intellectual, academic, social, and emotional needs. Educational activities that provide an appropriate level of challenge give these students the opportunity to stretch their thinking, to practice their advanced

skills, and to feel a sense of worth. Interactions with intellectual peers help these students develop a positive sense of self, and give them an opportunity to build friendships and to have meaningful discussions. Counselors and support personnel who are trained in gifted and talented education may prove helpful if students need assistance regarding social and emotional issues. Most importantly, teachers and others who are knowledgeable regarding the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students can share this information with others, so that a support system can be established in the school to help the gifted and talented students succeed.

VII. Special Populations

“Gifted and talented students transcend cultural, ethnic, and linguistic ties; conditions that are disabling; sexual orientation; poverty; and geography. In every possible subgroup of students there are those who are deserving, by right, not privilege, of those benefits typically associated with gifted education programming.”

—Jaime A. Castellano (2003, p. vii)

Special Populations That Are Designated as Gifted and Talented

Who/what are the special populations that may be designated as gifted and talented?

The term “special populations” is used in the field of gifted and talented education to refer to any group of students for whom additional considerations may be needed to access learning opportunities that will develop their gifts and talents optimally. Some populations (such as students from diverse ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds) are denied access to optimal learning because of identification procedures. These students are often referred to as *underrepresented* because the proportion of their membership in gifted and talented programs is well below the proportion in the general school-age population. Other populations (e.g., based on sex/gender issues or disabling conditions) are denied access because of an inappropriate match between services offered and their particular needs. These are often referred to as *underserved*. Just which populations are *special* is a matter of some debate. For example, in one text (Booth and Stanley, 2004), the table of contents lists chapters on students from Hispanic, African American, or Native American backgrounds; second language learners; individuals with talent in the visual arts; and young children. Another text (Castellano, 2003) lists bilingual and ESL pupils; learners from Hispanic, African American, Haitian, Native American, or biracial/bicultural backgrounds; females; individuals with disabilities or diverse sexual orientations; and students from economically disadvantaged families. Castellano points out that “certainly, there are more special populations than can be covered in one book” (p. vii). This document will not attempt to address all the categories of special populations, but will focus on two: gifted and talented individuals with accompanying disabilities, and gifted and talented individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds. The reason for this focus is that specific federal and state programs exist through which some of these learners needs can be addressed. However, these programs often take a deficiency perspective (Frasier and Passow, 1994), so it seems important to extend these efforts to also address their gifts and talents as well.

Students With Gifts and Talents and Disabilities

What are the characteristics of students with gifts and talents and disabilities?

Students who may manifest a particular ability but also have a disability identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are sometimes referred to

as *twice exceptional*. They can be grouped into three categories: (1) identified gifted and talented students who have disabilities, (2) unidentified students whose gifts and talents and disabilities may mask each other in average achievement, and (3) identified disabled students who are also gifted and talented (Baum and Owen, 1988).

Some characteristics of the above groups might include the following:

- Wide range of interests not necessarily related to school topics or learning
- Specific talent or consuming interest for which students have exceptional memory and knowledge
- Advanced problem-solving and reasoning skills
- Creativity or high levels of imagination
- Superior vocabulary
- High energy levels
- Discrepant verbal and performance abilities, as indicated on standardized tests
- Auditory and/or visual processing problems
- Problems with long-term or short-term memory
- Frustration with many school-related tasks
- Failure to complete assignments
- Unrealistic self-expectations
- Lack of organizational skills
- Low self-esteem
- Absence of social skills with some peers (Higgins & Nielson, 2000)

What special considerations should be made in the identification of twice exceptional students?

Like all groups of gifted and talented learners, twice exceptional students deserve services based on their abilities and their needs. Identification protocols need to be established that attend to individual differences in both designing programs and finding the students to be served in them. Twice exceptional students need an identification system that gathers data regarding both the students' abilities and their disabilities. In addition, identification of twice exceptional students needs to consider data regarding the following:

- What is the evidence of outstanding talent or ability?
- What is the evidence of the disability affecting the performance or ability?

Special education specialists will most likely need to be involved both in the identification as well as in the development of the services delivered to the twice exceptional student.

What accommodations should be made to programming or services for twice exceptional students?

Twice exceptional students need services specifically designed to nurture their strengths and abilities while also providing accommodations for their disability. These services or programs vary considerably in both form and content. They may include differentiation in the regular classroom through small-group or independent instruction, pull-out services where students may receive special education services and gifted and talented services, or self-contained classes where twice-exceptional students are grouped together for the entire day. Regardless of the program model that is utilized or the setting in which students are taught, several factors must be considered in designing effective programs for twice exceptional students.

- The program needs to focus on the students' strengths rather than their weaknesses.
- Curriculum should involve a variety of strategies, adaptations, and accommodations to help them succeed (Baum, Owen, and Dixon, 1991).
- Pace of the lesson or activity may need to be modified or adjusted to accommodate the students' disabilities (Higgins and Nielsen, 2000).
- Adaptive technology may be helpful and, in some cases, necessary to assist students in achieving particular goals or tasks.
- Modifications in the amount of work, the types of assignments, and the way students show what they have learned may be necessary in order for them to be successful.
- A cooperative relationship must be fostered between the special education staff and program, the gifted and talented staff and program, and regular classroom teachers in order for the optimum program to be developed for twice exceptional students.

Like other students classified as gifted and talented, students from special populations need social and emotional support in order to be successful. Students who are twice exceptional need support for both their disability as well as for their giftedness and talent. This support may include creating an emotionally safe environment, providing counseling, direct teaching of coping skills and strategies, and assistance in dealing with the frustrations they may experience in school. In addition, twice exceptional students need programs that emphasize their abilities, help them develop self-control, increase their desire to succeed, and assist them in working toward achievable goals (Olenchak and Reis, 2002).

What about involvement by parents or caregivers with twice exceptional students?

As with other populations of gifted and talented students, parental or caregiver involvement is essential. Parents or caregivers of twice exceptional students may be asked to sign IEP forms. In addition, providing assistance to the school in understanding the child's unique character traits and needs is essential to develop appropriate programs or services. This may often be done through negotiating 504 accommodations. In many communities, parent or caregiver support groups, such as Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG), provide help for parents or caregivers of twice exceptional learners (see Section VIII, "Parent/Caregiver and Community Relations").

Gifted and Talented Students With Culturally Diverse Backgrounds

What is cultural diversity?

Cultural diversity is a multidimensional concept. It begins with the variables that an individual uses to identify himself or herself as part of the broader national culture. In educational circles, special attention is given to those variables that distinguish an individual from the dominant culture. In the gifted and talented education literature, the variables that are most typically cited when discussing cultural diversity are ethnic or minority status, urban or rural residence, economic status, and particularly disadvantage and English language ability (Baldwin, 2004). Thus, care should be taken when reading this section not to assume automatically that cultural diversity refers to issues of race alone.

What are the characteristics of gifted and talented students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

Gifted and talented students from culturally diverse backgrounds are often seen from a deficiency perspective that focuses on issues such as the following:

- Underachievement in school.
- Familial issues that limit their ability to be involved in gifted and talented programs.
- Issues of poverty that prevent their being appropriately identified for services.
- Gender, race, or cultural discrimination in their school or community (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2007).

Frasier et al. (1995) have suggested that a proficiency perspective should be taken in which educators focus on the strengths students have and the contributions they can make. This can be done by delineating the ways in which the underlying traits, aptitudes, and behaviors that cut across cultures are manifest in a specific cultural group. These traits, aptitudes, and behaviors include motivation, communication, interest, problem-solving ability, imagination and creativity, memory, inquiry, insight, reasoning, and humor.

What special considerations should be given in the identification of students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

School personnel need focused staff development opportunities that alert teachers to the particular manifestations of giftedness and talent in these populations so their abilities are recognized and they become more likely to be referred for gifted and talented program services. Identification procedures and criteria need to be adapted to match the population and specific programs. Multiple measures should be used to get a clear picture of students' abilities. Bias that might stem from cultural, ethnic, gender or other issues should be mitigated in the identification process. Support for families in the identification process is also important. Staff members may need to translate forms or documents into

multiple languages, help families interpret scores or data, and help broaden their understanding regarding the program or service offered.

What accommodations are needed in programs and services that include students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

Some of the program options listed for twice exceptional students may be applied to serve students from these populations. In addition, modifications in curriculum, strategies, and support structures may need to be made to help these students develop a sense of success and also a readiness to take on challenging tasks (Callahan, 2007). Further, understandings regarding familial situations, cultural or ethnic backgrounds, diversity, and poverty are important in helping these students be successful in gifted and talented programs. Dr. Carolyn Callahan points out that crucial to these students' success is the formation of a multiple-pronged support structure that includes the teacher, parent, and a mentor who may be able to provide some outside assistance for the student or his or her family regarding the gifted and talented services being offered.

Further, gifted and talented students who may be underserved or underrepresented in gifted and talented programs need social and emotional support. Specific support strategies and systems may differ depending on the group, but it is important to note that without appropriate social and emotional support, these students won't necessarily be identified and may not be appropriately served. A few general suggestions can be made regarding the social and emotional support these students need. These would include:

- Helping these students create a positive identity so that they can be successful.
- Aiding them in negotiating demands of divergent cultures.
- Assisting them in goal-setting and in time management.
- Providing counseling as needed to help them deal with the challenges that impede their achievement and their success.
- Finding mentors in an area of interest who may provide assistance with goal-setting or future planning (Hebert & Olenchak, 2000).

How might parents or caregivers of students from culturally diverse backgrounds be involved?

Parents or caregivers of students who come from underrepresented or underserved populations may need assistance in interpreting data or in knowing how to help their student. Translations of documents or information may be necessary. Providing outreach activities or workshops where parents or caregivers can ask questions and gain information is also important. Specific questions these parents or caregivers may ask include how to support students' academic work at home, how to locate and access community resources, or what possibilities are available to meet future educational goals. When communicating with parents or caregivers, teachers need to be sensitive to cultural differences and environmental conditions that may affect a student's opportunity to succeed at school (see Section VIII, "Parent/Caregiver and Community Relations").

VIII. Parent/Caregiver and Community Relations

“Parenting a gifted child is like living in a theme park full of thrill rides. Sometimes you smile. Sometimes you gasp. Sometimes you scream. Sometimes you laugh. Sometimes you gaze in wonder and astonishment. Sometimes you’re frozen in your seat. Sometimes you’re proud. And sometimes, the ride is so nerve-wracking, you can’t do anything but cry.”

—Carol Strip and Gretchen Hirsh (2000, p. 3)

Research demonstrates that the education of any child is more effective with the involvement of parents, but with the academic interventions that are needed for gifted and talented students, it is essential for parents and teachers to work together for the benefit of that student (Robinson, Shore, Enersen, 2007).

Responsibilities of Parents/Caregivers

What are parents’/caregivers’ responsibilities for their child’s education?

Often the first evidence we have of a child’s abilities is in a meeting with the parents/caregivers. “Parents of gifted children are notoriously accurate in identifying their children’s abilities, especially if they have some ideas about how children normally develop” (Robinson, Shore, Enersen, 2007, p. 7). This could be before the child actually enters the school, or in a meeting where parents/caregivers are venting their frustrations with the school system. If the meeting becomes confrontational, the needs of the child can be lost in the argument. Sometimes, a parent/caregiver is labeled as “pushy” and is made to feel unwelcome in the school or classroom, when parents/caregivers truly have their child’s best interest at heart. It is important that the administration and/or teacher gather as much information as possible from parents/caregivers and not feel threatened by them. “To use the strong evidence that parents’ involvement is good for the child and the school, there must be positive and team-like communication between educators and parents” (Robinson, Shore Enersen, 2007, p. 10). Parents/caregivers are their child’s best advocate, and it is their responsibility to be that advocate. It is the parents’/caregivers’ responsibility to be involved with their child’s education with the school and beyond the school. Research indicates that “the home environment is critical to nurturing giftedness and instilling the values conducive to its full blossoming (Alvino, 1995, p. ix).

Rights of Parents/Caregivers

What are the rights of parents and caregivers?

No federal laws have been passed that provide a legal framework for gifted and talented education. The Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Act of 1994 was not established by Congress to protect the legal rights of gifted and talented children, but

rather to provide for model programs and projects. In contrast, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 does give extensive legal rights to persons with disabilities. Parents/caregivers of gifted and talented students have a right to know how the school is serving their child, just as all parents have that right to know. Utah administrative law requires districts to have a process for identifying gifted and talented students, as well as a process for appropriately placing gifted and talented students (see Appendix A). Parents/caregivers should be notified of identification procedures for placement in the services provided by a district in as many ways as possible: newsletters, SEOP conferences, newspaper announcements, flyers, and mailings. More than one testing date for identification is necessary to give as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in the identification process. Parents/caregivers also have a right to timely reporting of identification results. A review process of testing results, as well as an appeals process should also be in place for parents/caregivers to discuss or dispute results. While school districts may provide multiple pathways to participate in the identification process, because of the time and resources involved, school districts reserve the right to make the final decision regarding the number of students placed in actual services (see Section II, "Identification").

What Parents/Caregivers Need to Know

Although parents/caregivers of gifted and talented children know their children well, they still have many questions about giftedness and talent. They don't usually have an understanding of characteristics and their impact on their child's behavior, motivation, and social and emotional needs. "Parents must be provided with information regarding an understanding of giftedness and student characteristics" (NAGC, 1998, Table 4; see Appendix C). Information can be gathered from a variety of sources. A beginning resource could be a district's gifted and talented specialist, through whom other resources are often available to parents/caregivers and teachers (see "Resources").

Parents/caregivers need to know what school options or programs are available for their child, such as public, private, magnet, pull-out, clusters, acceleration, differentiation, honors, advanced placement, concurrent enrollment, International Baccalaureate, and early entrance to college (see Section IV, "Service Options"). Schools can gather information on internships, mentorships, and scholarships that are available for gifted and talented students.

One of the most important needs of parents/caregivers is to know they are not alone. Parents/caregivers need the support of others who are experiencing the same kind of challenges (Robinson, Shore, Enerson, 2007). Discussions with others who may be having the same issues or challenges can help parents/caregivers manage frustrations and provide a support system. Local affiliates of the state association and SENG groups may be available in some areas. If no support group exists, parents/caregivers can consider starting one. The state association, a local gifted and talented coordinator, or school counselors may facilitate this if so desired.

Effective Parent Advocacy

How might educators guide parents/caregivers to effectively advocate for their child?

Parents/caregivers can be and should be the best advocates for their child. They know him or her better than anyone. If a child's needs are not being met, then advocacy may be needed. Parents/caregivers need to understand that positive advocacy is the best approach and will accomplish more than being adversarial, even if their frustration level is very high. Advocacy is about building relationships with the teacher, the school, the district, and other parents who have the same goals. Approaching change should not be about criticism, but about improving the education for gifted and talented learners. A first step for parents/caregivers is to become an active participant in their child's education: meet with the teacher to discuss their child's needs; listen to the teacher's point of view; set goals; and volunteer when possible. Parents/caregivers should learn more about gifted and talented education from websites and publications; persuade others to learn more about gifted education by encouraging gifted and talented book groups or district task forces; and keep communication channels to teachers, administrators, and school boards open by using "good sense, good humor, and good manners" (Warrum and Burney, n.d., p. 79). Finally, parents/caregivers and educators need to understand the political piece of gifted and talented programs and become involved on the local, state, and national levels in advocating for better support and funding for gifted and talented children. Advocacy can bring change if it is given time, based on a knowledgeable foundation, and done appropriately.

Utilizing Parents/Caregivers in Gifted and Talented Programs

How might educators utilize parents/caregivers in gifted and talented programs?

Many, but not all, gifted and talented programs require a certain amount of time to be donated by the parents/caregivers to the program. Whether this is required or not, parents can be an excellent resource for the teacher and the students. Parents/caregivers can help in the classroom in a variety of ways, such as assisting with groups, being an expert resource in an area of learning, providing one-on-one time with students, and attending field trips. Parents/caregivers who cannot be in the classroom during the day can assist by preparing materials, gathering resources for curriculum, responding to student work, and providing mentorship or internships. Students in gifted and talented programs learn at a fast pace and often in depth, so parent/caregiver support is essential.

Parent/Caregiver Outreach

What kind of parent/caregiver outreach is needed in gifted and talented programs?

Communication with parents/caregivers is a key element in a gifted and talented program. A successful program will be done in partnership with parents/caregivers.

Meetings at the district level can present parents/caregivers with information on goals and philosophy, as well as the expectations of the gifted and talented program. Educators may keep parents/caregivers informed about gifted and talented curriculum, activities, plans, and issues through newsletters, conferences, and phone contacts. Inviting parents/caregivers into the classroom before, during, and at the end of the year helps parents/caregivers and students recognize the value of the program. Seminars may be organized to educate parents on gifted and talented characteristics, identification, differentiation, social and emotional needs, advocacy, or any other topic thought to be helpful to parents/caregivers. Information about presentations or conferences held by local affiliate, state or national organizations or universities can also be passed along to parents/caregivers through flyers, brochures, or letters.

Working With Parents/Caregivers

How might parents/caregivers and schools work together to support the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students?

“Parents and educators working cooperatively can make a significant difference in the emotional and intellectual growth of the gifted child” (DeVries, 2003, p. x). A counselor knowledgeable about gifted and talented students can be vital in helping students adjust to their surroundings, whether in a gifted and talented program or in the regular classroom. Helping students to understand their differences and value their worth needs to be reinforced at school as well as at home. Gifted and talented students may have issues with perfectionism, isolationism, sensitivity, and emotional intensity requiring understanding from all those who work with the student. Experts in social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students may be brought in for presentations, or a book group or support group may increase everyone’s knowledge about working with gifted and talented students. A supportive environment where both the educators and the parents/caregivers are working for the benefit of the student will maximize the chances of his or her success.

Using Community Resources for Programs

How can community resources be helpful to a gifted and talented program?

“Active participation in the community and the use of its resources are necessary for special programs to achieve service excellence” (Smutney, 2003, p. 127). Finding resources in the community may take some time, but the benefit is worth it. Parents/caregivers can be the first resource in finding what is available for students. Parent/caregiver occupations, hobbies, and talents may provide new experiences for children. Gifted and talented students usually have a deep interest in one or more subjects. Resources for these areas of interest can be found at universities, museums, libraries, government agencies, media organizations, and research centers. Giving students an opportunity to see and explore new adventures may help them develop interests that can last a lifetime and one day make a difference in the world. Networking

with community resources may also provide students with mentorships in an area of interest such as the arts, sciences, mathematics, communications, or social sciences.

Gifted and talented children often have a deep sensitivity to others. They develop empathy for those less fortunate or concern for the environment around them. Community service provides encouragement to the “development of gifted students’ natural capacity to care, their intense interest in justice, and their tendency toward moral, ethical behavior” (Silverman, 1993a, p. 226). Community problem solving can begin with having the students observe what is around them and look for problems that need to be solved. Community service is more effective when the ideas come from the student or students. It can expand the curriculum and allow students to use reading, writing, and presentation skills that offer the challenge gifted and talented students need and give them experience in addressing real-world issues. There are many ways to give service, individually or as a group, that allow students to feel accomplishment and fulfillment in improving the community in which they live.

IX. Leadership

“Once upon a time, America sheltered an Einstein, went to the moon, and gave the world the laser, the electronic computer, nylons, television, and the cure for polio. Today, we are in the process, albeit unwittingly, of abandoning this leadership role.”

—Leon M. Lederman (cited in Renzulli, 2005, p. 88)

Leadership is crucial to the success of a district gifted and talented education program. There must be support at both the district and school levels, which follows an organized and comprehensive plan for designing, executing, coordinating, and revising services for gifted and talented learners.

Leadership Activities for Quality Gifted and Talented Education

What leadership activities are necessary to ensure quality gifted and talented education in districts and schools?

“The presence of authentic instructional leadership can be witnessed in the everyday acts of people who take responsibility for improving teaching and learning in the entire school community, and its effectiveness will be revealed in a variety of measures of student achievement” (King, 2002, p. 63). This statement explicitly identified at least three areas of activity for instructional leaders; creating community, fostering development, and taking responsibility. As for any school program, gifted and talented education requires that educators actively fulfill these functions to ensure success.

Making Gifted and Talented Education an Integral Part of the Education Community

What does an instructional leader need to do so that gifted and talented education programs are seen as an integral part of the education community?

First, an instructional leader must investigate his or her own beliefs relative to gifted and talented education. As mentioned in Section III, “Program Standards,” when a district or school mission statement refers to growth for all students, is this truly reflected in the messages communicated by the instructional leader? One piece of evidence to consider is whether or not resources are allocated and managed in such a way that the gifted and talented program is supported as any other educational program. Once the leader has honestly dealt with this issue, he or she then needs to involve all school staff in discussions that build a real sense of ownership and responsibility for the learning of all students, including the gifted and talented.

Building from these initial discussions, leaders must provide opportunities for continued networking among professionals both within and across educational programs. Gifted and talented students reside in nearly every classroom. There need to be structures provided

within a professional learning community for educators to share, ask questions, and learn together as they strive to meet the unique needs of these students.

In addition, specialized educators working with gifted and talented students need time to communicate with their gifted and talented education peers. However, they also need time to collaborate with peers from general education and special education. Good instructional leaders systematically organize times and places for this collaboration to occur.

Setting Up an Advisory Group

How might the district set up and use an advisory group?

A gifted and talented advisory committee can play an important and necessary role in the development of services for gifted and talented learners in a district. Its members serve as volunteers who meet on a regular basis over time to provide support to the district. Members offer perspective, expertise, time, and commitment to the development and implementation of a district's gifted and talented plan. Establishing such an advisory committee creates program ownership, increases the likelihood of a high-quality program, and ensures program longevity.

When considering members for the committee, the district should consider the roles represented by the anticipated individuals. A broad spectrum should be represented, including administrators, gifted and talented education teachers, regular classroom teachers, support personnel, professional organizations, parents/caregivers, and the community. The guidance for roles and responsibilities of the committee should be determined prior to its creation. Governance procedures within the committee could also be established before its activation. Advisory committee by-laws can accomplish both of these administrative tasks.

Staff Development

Why is staff development needed, and who should be involved?

According to *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent* (1993), professional development is essential in preparing educators to provide the challenging curricula and varied learning opportunities that gifted and talented students must have to develop their potential. The program standard for professional development by NAGC (1998) states, "Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparation in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary professional traits" (Table 6; see Appendix C). The Utah Administrative Rule declares, "Provisions shall be made in the district plan for staff development and support" (R277-711-3.E). An ongoing staff development program will increase interest in gifted and talented education and allow educators to develop the skills necessary to meet the needs of gifted and talented learners.

The responsibility for providing appropriate learning opportunities for gifted and talented students should not rest solely with the classroom teacher. Administrators, guidance counselors, specialists, teachers, and other school personnel share responsibility in meeting the diverse needs of gifted and talented learners. Therefore, staff development for gifted and talented education programs must include all educational personnel.

What would a comprehensive program of staff development in gifted and talented education look like?

The National Staff Development Council created a set of standards for professional development (2001). These standards provide professional guidance in planning staff development, from concept to implementation.

Dr. Robert Marzano (2003) discusses the need for teachers to engage in meaningful staff development experiences. However, he cautions that “although many schools have regularly scheduled staff development sessions, much of what is done in these sessions is not necessarily meaningful or useful in terms of impacting student achievement” (p. 65). Therefore, providing staff development or having a plan for doing so is insufficient for influencing teacher effectiveness. Quality components must also be considered in developing a comprehensive plan.

According to Imbeau (2006), the professional development plan that addresses the needs of gifted and talented learners should:

- Be aligned with other district staff development efforts that make systematic change possible and manageable.
- Be an integral part of a deliberately developed continuous improvement effort.
- Be designed and implemented collaboratively by classroom teachers, specialists in gifted education, and administrators.
- Include long-term goals for the district/school program and outline a process for determining appropriate interim steps that would be necessary to achieve the goals.
- Contain content that is viewed by participants as a necessary means to achieve the desired end.
- Be consistent, with recommended strategies of experts in gifted education and staff development.
- Differentiate staff development to address critical differences among participants.
- Include a plan for assessing the effectiveness of the staff development goals (p. 185).

What are the desired outcomes of staff development activities?

The creation of any staff development opportunity should begin with the expected outcomes in mind. All specific outcomes should align with the overarching goal of increasing participants’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support the learning of gifted and talented students. Some possible outcomes might include:

- To provide for the design and implementation of the district comprehensive gifted and talented education plan.
- To foster strong administrative support and involvement in qualitatively differentiated educational programs.
- To demonstrate respect for the individuality of students.
- To bring educators up-to-date on best practices in gifted and talented education.
- To extend the training of educators in identification, continuum of services, and assessment of gifted and talented learners.
- To provide trainer-of-trainers opportunities for staff development within the local school district.
- To organize a network for sharing strategies and concerns of the gifted and talented education plan.
- To encourage the continual refinement of programs.

Qualifications of Teachers in Gifted and Talented Programs

What qualifications are needed to work with gifted and talented students?

Ideally, teachers of gifted and talented students, whether in the regular classroom, a gifted pull-out program, or a special gifted program, would possess a Gifted and Talented Endorsement. This endorsement is optional in the state of Utah unless a teacher is teaching a class identified as “gifted.” As with all specialized teaching assignments, teachers who teach an identified gifted class must hold the appropriate endorsement, or they would not be highly qualified. In teacher preparation programs, undergraduate students are required to pass courses in disabilities but not giftedness. Therefore, the coursework that will prepare them to work with gifted and talented students is usually done at the post-graduate level.

Only in the 20th century has an academic discipline existed to provide training for teachers of high-potential youth. In the United States alone, over 100 universities offer courses and degree or certificate programs. In Utah, several universities offer the coursework required to obtain a Gifted and Talented Endorsement from the Utah State Office of Education. Many local districts work in partnership with these universities to provide these courses at the local level.

NAGC states “that all children deserve the highest quality of instruction possible and that such instruction will only occur when teachers are aware of and able to respond to the unique qualities and characteristics of the students they instruct. Gifted and talented students present a particular challenge and often experience inadequate and inappropriate education. To provide appropriate learning experiences for gifted and talented students, teachers need to possess:

- A knowledge and valuing of the origins and nature of high levels of intelligence, including creative expressions of intelligence.

- A knowledge and understanding of the cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics, needs, and potential problems experienced by gifted and talented students from diverse populations.
- A knowledge of and access to advanced content and ideas.
- An ability to develop a differentiated curriculum appropriate to meeting the unique intellectual, social, and emotional needs and interests of gifted and talented students.
- An ability to create an environment in which gifted and talented students can feel challenged and safe to explore and express their uniqueness.

District Responsibility for Accountability

What is the district responsibility for accountability related to gifted and talented education?

The Utah Administrative Rule articulates the district accountability related to gifted and talented education. Program standards are included in Utah Administrative Rule R277-711-3 and were discussed more fully in Section III, “Program Standards” (see <http://www.schools.utah.gov>). Administrative Rule R277-722-4 provides guidance concerning fiscal issues. It states, “Districts will receive their share of state funds based on weighted pupil units and necessarily existent small schools.” It also directs how school districts may use those allocated funds, including planning, program development, identification, salaries, in-service costs, conferences, workshops, supplies, materials, and equipment to supplement and enhance the educational programs for gifted and talented students. These funds allocated for gifted and talented students “shall not be used for Advanced Placement or Concurrent Enrollment programs” (R277-711-4.C).

Financing Gifted and Talented Programs

How are gifted and talented programs financed?

The Utah Minimum School Program, through the Accelerated Learning Program, is the main source of gifted and talented funding for most Utah districts. Specific funding information may be obtained at <http://www.schools.utah.gov>. The chart below shows the items to click on to view a specific district’s allocation.

<p>Programs</p> <p>School Finance and Statistics</p> <p>Quick Links</p> <p>Allotment Memo</p>

A few districts have passed voted leeways to improve student learning (including gifted and talented services). Other districts include additional monies from a variety of district funding sources to provide for gifted and talented learners. Federal, state, and foundation

grants have also been awarded to districts and consortia. The most prominent federal grants program to which districts may apply for funding in gifted and talented education is the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Student Program. Districts that are most successful in competing for federal or foundation dollars usually have a district-wide system for developing, submitting, and managing grant proposals. Opportunities for using portions of federal flow-through funds to support gifted program efforts through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act may also be available. For example, in the current No Child Left Behind version of ESEA, opportunities exist through Title 2A (Staff Development) and Title 5 (Innovative Programs).

Purposes of Evaluation

What are the purposes of gifted and talented program evaluation?

All evaluation is done primarily to gather information to make decisions. Generally, there are three types of decisions for which evaluation information should be obtained: (1) Do we need a specific type of gifted and talented program? (2) How can we improve our existing gifted and talented program? (3) Is our gifted and talented program meeting its established goals? These questions correlate with needs assessment, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation. In answering these questions, it is necessary to identify which program components should be evaluated in order to find the best information that will assist in making the needed decision. The components to be considered have been listed in Section III, "Program Standards."

Conducting an Evaluation

How should a program evaluation be conducted?

The first step is to identify specific decisions that need to be made with the information gained from the evaluation. Data gathering should be limited to the specific information needed so that important resources are not wasted.

The second step is to determine who should carry out the evaluation. External evaluation often lends credence to the information that an internal evaluator cannot bring. However, external evaluation is expensive. Internal evaluation can usually be done more systematically over the long term, but personnel internal to a program are sometimes too close to the involved issues to take a broader perspective.

The next step is to gather and analyze data. Depending on the information needs, data sources can include students, teachers, parents, administrators, support staff, and community members. Data can be gathered through standardized tests, locally produced tests, rating scales, checklists, inventories, lesson plans, units, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and observations. Data analysis might include narratives, descriptive or inferential statistics, or category systems.

Next, the information must be reported. Reporting should be done in a format that is accessible to those who must make the needed decisions. Reports can be done with tables, charts, graphs, memoranda, executive summaries, video, PowerPoint presentations, oral reports, and press releases. Usually, unless specific personnel issues are involved, reports of evaluation information are public records and should be made available to all stakeholders.

Finally, the needed decision must be made. While it is appropriate for stakeholders to ask for recommendations from the evaluators, it is ultimately the responsibility of program leaders to make the decisions. Evaluation information itself, though it may lead directly to certain conclusions, does not often lead directly to a decision to act in one way or another. Decisions must be made using the information in the context of local values, policies, and priorities.

X. Gifted and Talented Resource List

Gifted and Talented (General)

Annemarie Roeper: Selected Writings and Speeches, A. Roeper. (1995). Free Spirit Publishing.

Best Practices in Gifted Education: An Evidence-Based Guide, A. Robinson, B. M. Shore, & D. L. Enersen. (2006). Prufrock Press.

Critical Issues and Practices in Gifted Education: What the Research Says, C. Callahan & J. Plucker. (2007). Prufrock Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 1, Definitions and Conceptions of Giftedness, R. Sternberg. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 2, Identification of Students for Gifted and Talented Programs, J. S. Renzulli. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 3, Grouping and Acceleration Practices in Gifted Education, L. Brody. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 4, Curriculum for Gifted and Talented Students, J. Van Tassel-Baska. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 5, Differentiation for Gifted and Talented Students, C.A. Tomlinson. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 6, Culturally Diverse & Underserved Populations of Gifted Students, A. Baldwin. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 7, Twice-Exceptional and Special Populations of Gifted Students, S. Baum. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 8, Social/Emotional Issues, Underachievement, and Counseling Gifted and Talented Students, S. M. Moon. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 9, Artistically and Musically Talented Students, E. Zimmerman. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 10, Creativity and Giftedness, D. Treffinger. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 11, Program Evaluation in Gifted Education, C. M. Callahan. (2004). Corwin Press.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education: Volume 12, Public Policy in Gifted Education, J. J. Gallagher. (2004). Corwin Press.

Genius Denied: How to Stop Wasting Our Brightest Young Minds, J. Davidson , B. Davidson , L. Vanderkam. (2005). Simon & Schuster.

Gifted Children and Legal Issues: An Update, F.A. Karnes & R.G. Marquardt. (2000). Gifted Psychology Press.

Gifted Children and the Law, F. A. Karnes & R. G. Marquardt. (1991). Ohio Psychology Press.

Gifted Children, Gifted Education, G. Davis. (2007). Great Potential Press.

Gifted Children: Myths and Realities, E. Winner. (1996). Harper Collins Publishers.

Growing Up Gifted: Developing the Potential of Children at Home and at School (7th Edition), B. Clark. (2008). Prentice Hall.

In the Eyes of the Beholder: Critical Issues for Diversity in Gifted Education, D. Booth & J.C. Stanley. (2004). Prufrock Press.

Losing Our Minds: Gifted Children Left Behind, D. L. Ruf. (2005). Great Potential Press.

Talented Children and Adults: Their Development and Education, J. Piirto. (2006). Prufrock Press.

Understanding Creativity, J. Piirto. (2004). Great Potential Press.

Programming for Gifted and Talented Students

A Practitioner's Guild to Evaluating Programs for the Gifted, C.M. Callahan & M.S. Caldwell. (1997). National Association for Gifted Children.

Aiming for Excellence: Gifted Program Standards, M. Landrum, C. Callahan, & B. D. Shaklee. (2001). Prufrock Press.

Alternative Assessments for Identifying Gifted and Talented Students, J. VanTassel-Baska. (2007). Prufrock Press.

Building a Gifted Program: Identifying and Educating Gifted Students in Your School, M. R. Leavitt. (2007). Great Potential Press.

Designing and Developing Programs for Gifted Students, J.F. Smutney. (2003). Corwin Press.

Designing and Utilizing Evaluation for Gifted Program Improvement, J. VanTassel-Baska & A. Feng. (2003). Prufrock Press.

Designing Services & Programs for High-Ability Learners: A Guidebook for Gifted Education, J.H. Purcell & R.D. Eckert. (2005). Corwin Press.

Educating Gifted Students in Middle School, S. Rakow. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Education of the Gifted and Talented, 5th Edition, G. Davis & S. Rimm. (2003). Allyn & Bacon.

Handbook of Gifted Education (3rd Edition), N. Colangelo, G. A. Davis. (2002). Allyn & Bacon.

Handbook of Secondary Gifted Education, F.A. Dixon & S.M. Moon. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Identifying Gifted Students: A Practical Guide, S. Johnson. (2003). Prufrock Press.

In Search of the Dream: Designing Schools and Classrooms That Work for High Potential Students From Diverse Cultural Backgrounds, C. A. Tomlinson, D. Y. Ford, S. M. Reis, C. J. Briggs, C. Strickland. (2004). NAGC/National Research Center on Gifted and Talented.

NAGC Gifted Program Standards in Action, E. P. Coyne. (2001). NAGC.

Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child, K. Rogers. (2002). Great Potential Press.

Serving Gifted Learners Beyond the Traditional Classroom: A Guide to Alternative Programs and Services, J. Van Tassel-Baska. (2006). Prufrock Press.

The Survival Guide for Teachers of Gifted Kids: How to Plan, Manage, and Evaluate Programs for Gifted Youth K-12, J. Delisle & B. Lewis. (2003). Free Spirit Publishing.

Curriculum

Acceleration Strategies for Teaching Gifted Learners (The Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), J. VanTassel-Baska. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Assessment in the Classroom: The Key to Good Instruction (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), C.M. Callahan. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Curriculum Compacting: The Complete Guide to Modifying the Regular Curriculum for High Ability Students, S.M. Reis, D. Burns & J. Renzulli. (1992). Creative Learning Press.

Curriculum Compacting: An Easy Start to Differentiating for High Potential Students (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), F.A. Karnes. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Comprehensive Curriculum for Gifted Learners (3rd Edition), J. Van Tassel-Baska. (2005). Allyn & Bacon.

Content-Based Curriculum for High Ability Learners, J. Van Tassel-Baska & C.A. Little. (2003). Prufrock Press.

Creativity in the Classroom: Schools of Curious Delight, A. Starko. (2004). Routledge.

Curriculum Planning and Instructional Design for Gifted Learners, J. Van Tassel-Baska. (2003). Love Publishing Company.

Developing Math Talent: A Guide for Educating Gifted and Advanced Learners in Math, S. Assouline & A. Lupkowski-Shoplik. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Developing Mathematically Promising Students, L.J. Sheffield. (1999). The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Developing Mentorship Programs for Gifted Students (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), F.A. Karnes & K.R. Stephens. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Differentiating Instruction in the Regular Classroom, D. Heaton. (2002). Free Spirit Publishing.

Differentiated Instructional Strategies: One Size Doesn't Fit All, G.H. Gregory & C. Chapman. (2006). Corwin Press.

Enrichment Opportunities for Gifted Learners (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), F.A. Karnes. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Excellence in Educating Gifted & Talented Learners, J. Van Tassel-Baska. (1998). Love Publishing Co.

Fostering Creativity in Gifted Students (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), F.A. Karnes & B. Cramond. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Independent Study for Gifted Learners (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), F.A. Karnes. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Intelligent Life in the Classroom: Smart Kids and Their Teachers, K. Isaacson & T.J. Fisher. (2007). Great Potential Press.

Inventions and Inventing for Gifted Students (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), T. Herbert, F.A. Karnes, & K.R. Stephens. (2005). Prufrock Press.

It's About Time: Inservice Strategies for Curriculum Compacting, A. Starko. (1986). Creative Learning Press.

Smart in the Middle Grades, C. A. Tomlinson & K. Doubet. (2006). National Middle School Association.

Some of My Best Friends Are Books: Guiding Gifted Readers from Pre-School to High School, J. W. Halsted. (2002). Great Potential Press.

Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom, J. Roberts & T. Inman. (2006). Prufrock Press.

The Parallel Curriculum, C.A. Tomlinson, S.N. Kaplan, J.S. Renzulli, J.H. Purcell, J.H. Leppien, & D.E. Burns. (2002). Corwin Press.

The Parallel Curriculum in the Classroom: Book 1, C.A. Tomlinson, S.N. Kaplan, J.H. Purcell, J.H. Leppien, D.E. Burns, & C.A. Strickland. (2006). Corwin Press.

The Parallel Curriculum in the Classroom: Book 2, C.A. Tomlinson, S.N. Kaplan, J.H. Purcell, J.H. Leppien, D.E. Burns, & C.A. Strickland. (2006). Corwin Press.

Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom, S. Winnebrenner & P. Espeland. (2001). Free Spirit Publishing.

Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom, J. F. Smutney, S.Y. Walker. & E. A. Meckstroth & M. Lisovskies. (1997). Free Spirit Publishing.

Using Media & Technology With Gifted Learners (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), F.A. Karnes. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted and Talented Students

Counseling the Gifted and Talented, L. K. Silverman. (1993). Love Publishing Company.

Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration, S. Mendaglio. (2008). Great Potential Press.

Gifted Kids Speak Out, J. R. Delisle. (1987). Free Spirit Publishing.

Guiding the Gifted Child: A Practical Source for Parents and Teachers, J.T. Webb, E. A. Meckstroth, & S.S. Tolan. (2005). Great Potential Press.

On the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Children, T. L. Cross. (2003). Prufrock Press.

Perfectionism: What's Bad About Being Too Good, M. Elliot, M. Adderholdt & C. Price. (1999). Free Spirit Publishing.

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Social and Emotional Teaching Strategies (Practical Strategies Series in Gifted Education), S.A. Nugent & F.A. Karnes. (2005). Prufrock Press.

Smart Boys: Manhood, Talent and the Search for Meaning, B. Kerr & S. Cohn. (2001). Great Potential Press.

Smart Girls: A New Psychology of Girls, Women, and Giftedness, B. Kerr. (1997). Great Potential Press.

When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers: How to Meet Their Social and Emotional Needs, J. Delisle & J. Galbraith. (2002). Free Spirit Publishing.

Work Left Undone: Choices & Compromises of Talented Females, S.M. Reis. (1998). Creative Learning Press.

Special Populations

Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults, J. T. Webb, E.R. Amend, N. E. Webb, J. Goerrss, P. Beljan, & R.F. Olenchak. (2005). Great Potential Press.

Overlooked Gems: A National Perspective on Low-Income Promising Students Learners, J. VanTassel-Baska & T. Stambaugh. (2007). National Association for Gifted Children.

Smart Kids With Learning Disabilities: Overcoming Obstacles and Realizing Potential, R. Weinfeld, S. Jeweler, L. Barnes-Robinson, & B. Shevitz. (2006). Prufrock Press.

Special Populations in Gifted Education: Working with Diverse Gifted Learners, J.A. Castellano. (2003). Allyn & Bacon.

Talented Children and Adults: Their Development and Education (3rd ed.), J. Piirto. (2006). Prufrock Press.

The Twice-Exceptional Dilemma, National Association for Gifted & National Education Association.

Parents

A Love for Learning: Motivation and the Gifted Child, C. Whitney, G. Hirsch. (2007). Great Potential Press.

A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children, J. T. Webb, J. L. Gore, E. R. Amend & A.R. DeVries. (2007). Great Potential Press.

Being Smart About Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators, D. J. Matthews, J. F. Foster. (2004). Great Potential Press.

Helping Gifted Children Soar: A Practical Guide for Parents and Teachers, C. Strip. (2000). Great Potential Press.

Hothouse Kids: The Dilemma of the Gifted Child, A. Quart. (2006). Penguin Press HC.

Infinity and Zebra Stripes: Life with Gifted Children, W. Skinner. (2007). Great Potential Press.

Keys to Parenting the Gifted Child, S. B. Rimm. (2006). Great Potential Press.

Parenting Gifted Kids: Tips for Raising Happy and Successful Children, J. Delisle. (2006). Prufrock Press

Raising Gifted Kids: Everything You Need to Know to Help Your Exceptional Child Thrive, B.S. Klein. (2006). AMACOM/American Management Association.

Stand Up for Your Gifted Child, J.F. Smutney. (2001). Free Spirit Press.

The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids, S.Y. Walker. (2002). Free Spirit Press.

They Say My Kid's Gifted: Now What? R.F. Olenchak. (1998). Prufrock Press.

Websites

Academy of Achievement

<http://www.achievement.org>

Biographies and interviews with eminent people in their field

Association for the Education of Gifted Underachievement Students

<http://www.aegus1.org>

Advocacy for twice-exceptional and underachieving gifted students

Association for the Gifted

<http://www.cectag.org>

An organization that is a division of the Council for Exceptional Children

Belin-Blank Center

<http://www.education.uiowa.edu/belinblank/>

Center at the University of Iowa providing information and opportunities for gifted students

Center for Evaluation of Gifted Children

<http://www.a-gifted-child.com>

Links and information on gifted children

Council for Exceptional Children

<http://www.cec.sped.org>

Special education website with some information on gifted

Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu>

University of Connecticut

Center for Gifted Education Policy

<http://www.apa.org/ed/cgep.html>

Homepage of the American Psychological Association Center for Gifted Policy that generates information and research on children with gifts and talents

Davidson Institute for Talent Development

<http://www.davidsoninstitute.org>

Links to gifted information and to the Davidson Academy

Education and Gifted Student Resources

<http://kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html>

Articles published on gifted and talented students and education

ERIC Clearinghouse for Disabilities and Gifted Education

<http://ericec.org>

Research and articles on gifted and talented students and education

Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Education

<http://www-dept.usm.edu/~gifted/>

References and links to information about gifted students

Free Spirit Publishing

<http://www.freespirit.com>

Publishing specializing in gifted education, emotional needs of all children and service learning

Gifted Child Today

<http://www.prufrock.com>

Monthly magazine for gifted education

Gifted Children Monthly

<http://www.gifted-children.com>

Annual subscription website with timely information about gifted children

Gifted Development Center

<http://gifteddevelopment.com>

Site of center in Denver, Colorado and gifted expert Dr. Linda Silverman

GT World

<http://gtworld.org>

Online support for parents of gifted children

Hoagies Gifted Education Page

<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org>

Gifted information for parents and educators

International Baccalaureate Organization

<http://www.ibo.org>

Programs for high quality international education

John Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth

<http://www.cty.jhu.edu/ts>

John Hopkins talent search and program information

Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program

<http://kygsp.org>

A summer enrichment program for high-ability students

Mensa

<http://www.mensa.org>

A forum for intellectual exchange

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

<http://www.nagc.org>

Advocacy as well as informational organization for educators and parents

National Foundation for Gifted and Creative Children

<http://www.nfgcc.org>

An informational organization for parents of gifted children

National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu>

Research center for the education of gifted and talented students

NEAG Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu>

Models and links in gifted education

Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education

<http://www.penngifted.org>

Information on Pennsylvania resources but also includes a gifted links

Pieces of Learning

<http://piecesoflearning.com>

A leading publisher in supplementary enrichment activity books and videos

Prufrock Press

<http://www.prufrock.com>

World's largest publisher of materials in gifted education

Rocky Mountain Talent Search

<http://www.du.edu/education/ces/rmts.html>

Testing and summer opportunities for gifted and talented students

Sage School

<http://come.to/sage>

An independent, non-profit school in Massachusetts for gifted and talented students

Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted

<http://www.SENGifted.org>

Information on the social-emotional needs of gifted children and adults

Summer Institute for the Gifted

<http://www.cgp-sig.com>

Summer institutes offered through residential and day programs at various universities

TAG Families of the Talented and Gifted

<http://www.tagfam.org>

Information for parents of gifted children

Teachers First

<http://teachersfirst.com/gifted/strategies.html>

Meeting the needs of gifted children in the regular classroom

The Templeton National Report on Acceleration

<http://www.nationdeceived.org>

Free downloadable copy of the research on acceleration

TIP Program

<http://www.tip.duke.edu/>

Duke University Talent Search

Uniquely Gifted: Resources for Gifted Children with Special Needs

<http://www.uniquelygifted.org>

Resources for ADHA, Learning Disabilities and Asperger Syndrome, etc.

University of Utah Youth Academy of Excellence

<http://continue.utah.edu/youth/yae/index.php>

A summer program for students who enjoy thinking deeply and questioning

Utah Association for Gifted Children (UAGC)

<http://www.uagc.org>

A Utah advocacy and informational organization for parents and educators

Utah History Fair

<http://www.usu.edu/utahfair/histfair.html>

Information about History Fair with a link to the National site

Utah State Office of Education

<http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/main/ProfessionalDevelopment.htm>

Utah Gifted and Talented Plan Template

<http://www.schools.utah.gov/sars/lawsregs/pdfs/propchanges.pdf>

Utah State Administrative Rule

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

<http://www.worldgifted.ca/>

An organization to help focus world attention of gifted and talented children

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Appendices

A) State Board Rules

Gifted Children Accelerated Learning: R277 Education & Administration and R277-711 Educational Programs for Gifted and Talented Students.

R277-711-1 Definitions

- A. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.
- B. "Gifted and talented students" means children and youth whose superior performance or potential for accomplishment requires a differentiated and challenging education program to meet their needs in any one or more of the following areas:
 - (1) general intellectual: students who demonstrate a high aptitude for abstract reasoning and conceptualization, who master skills and concepts quickly, and who are exceptionally alert and observant;
 - (2) specific academic: students who evidence extraordinary learning ability in one or more specific disciplines;
 - (3) visual and performing arts: students who are consistently superior in the development of a product or performance in any of the visual and performing arts;
 - (4) leadership: students who emerge as leaders, and who demonstrate high ability to accomplish group goals by working with and through others;
 - (5) creative, critical or productive thinking: students who are highly insightful, imaginative, and innovative, and who consistently assimilate and synthesize seemingly unrelated information to create new and novel solutions for conventional tasks.
- C. "Accelerated" means enabling students to move through academic programs based on their performance level.
- D. "Enrichment" means classes or programs that provide greater depth and breadth of experiences and information than students would receive in traditional classes.
- E. "Accelerated learning programs" means programs for: gifted and talented students, concurrent enrollment students and students enrolled in the College Board Advanced Placement Program.
- F. "Programs for gifted and talented students" means differentiated and challenging educational programs designed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in one or more areas identified in Section 1(B).

R277-711-2. Authority and Purpose

- A. This rule is authorized by Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3 which vests general control and supervision of public education in the Board, Section 53A-17a-120 which directs the Board to adopt rules for the expenditure of funds appropriated for accelerated learning programs, Section 53A-1-402(1) which authorizes the Board to adopt rules for special programs and Section 53A-1-401(3) which authorizes the Board to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities.
- B. The purpose of this rule is to specify standards and procedures for using a portion of

accelerated learning program funds to develop programs and services for gifted and talented students.

R277-711-3. Program Standards

- A. Appropriately qualified people shall direct and implement the district's program(s) for gifted and talented students.
- B. Each district shall have a process for identifying students in one or more of the areas listed in Section 1(B) based upon at least three assessment instruments. These instruments shall not be solely dependent upon English vocabulary or comprehension skills and shall take into consideration abilities of culturally diverse, handicapped and underachieving students.
- C. Each school district shall have a process for appropriately placing students identified as gifted and talented.
- D. Each school district shall develop and submit, to the Utah State Office of Education for review annually, a plan for educating gifted and talented students. This plan shall reflect a time frame appropriate to the district. The district plan shall contain provisions to:
 - (1) develop a written philosophy for the education of gifted and talented students that is consistent with the goals and values of the school district and the community;
 - (2) select a district coordinator who is responsible for the program;
 - (3) recognize a variety of areas in which a student may be identified as gifted;
 - (4) provide carefully integrated and articulated curricula throughout the district;
 - (5) identify and use teaching strategies that are appropriate to the learning styles and emotional needs of gifted and talented students;
 - (6) adopt flexible pacing at all levels and allow students to advance as they master content and skills;
 - (7) offer program options that reach through and beyond the normal institutional boundaries: across disciplines, across grade levels, and across levels of intelligence;
 - (8) provide guidance to assist students in addressing personal and interpersonal needs, in program selection and in career and college choices;
 - (9) balance acceleration with enrichment activities for diverse types and degrees of intelligence;
 - (10) provide information regarding special services, programs, and other appropriate educational opportunities; and
 - (11) utilize appropriate community and private resources.
- E. Provisions shall be made in the district plan for staff development and support.
- F. Each district shall evaluate its program to assure accountability, assess the success of individual program elements, and determine student growth and achievement.

R277-711-4. Fiscal Standards

- A. Each school district shall receive its share of funds in the proportion that the district's number of weighted pupil units for kindergarten through grade twelve and necessarily existent small schools bears to the state total.
- B. Funds shall be used in any of the following areas:
 - (1) planning, program development, and identification of students;

- (2) salaries, in-service education costs, and the costs of conferences, workshops, and other educational activities designed to enable teachers to better serve gifted and talented students;
- (3) supplies, materials, and equipment to supplement and enhance the education programs for gifted and talented students.
- C. Funds allocated for programs for gifted and talented students shall not be used for Advanced Placement or Concurrent Enrollment programs.
- D. The Utah State Office of Education shall have fiscal and pupil accounting procedures to assess programs for gifted and talented students.

KEY: Gifted Children Accelerated Learning

Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: 1990

Notice of Continuation: November 23, 2005

Authorizing and Implemented or Interpreted Law: 53A-1-402(1); 53A-1-401(3); 53A-17a-120

**B) Utah State Gifted and Talented Plan Template as described in
CUSAP found on the USOE website at www.usoe.iassessment.org**

District Plan for Gifted & Talented Students

Area	District Plan for Gifted and Talented Students
Philosophy	Describe the philosophy in the district for the education of gifted and talented students.
Program Goals and Values	What are the goals and values of the school district? What are the goals and values of the community?
Student Identification Plan	Recognize and list the variety of areas in which a student may be identified as gifted.
Integrated and Articulated Curricula	Explain the integrated and articulated curricula throughout the district.
Teaching Strategies	Identify the teaching strategies used in the district that are appropriate to the learning styles and emotional needs of gifted and talented students.
Flexible Pacing	Describe the options for flexible pacing throughout all levels. Are students allowed to advance as they master content and skills? Please explain.
Program Options	What are the program options available in the district that reach through and beyond the normal institutional boundaries (i.e. across disciplines, across grade levels, across levels of intelligence)?
Guidance Activities	What are the type(s) of guidance activities available to assist students in addressing personal and interpersonal needs? Do these activities address program selection and career and college choices?
Acceleration and Enrichment Activities	How does the district balance acceleration with enrichment activities for diverse types and degrees of intelligence?
Special Services	Please provide information regarding special services, programs, and other appropriate educational opportunities. Do they utilize appropriate community and private resources?
Staff Development	Describe and provide the provisions made by the district for staff development and support.
Evaluation/Reflection	Provide an evaluation, include data if possible, of the district's program to assure accountability, assess the success of individual program elements, and determine student's growth and achievement.

C) National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Pre-K – Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards

Introduction

In 1998, NAGC developed and released the *Pre-K–Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards* to assist school districts in examining the quality of their programming for gifted learners. Recognizing that the ongoing evaluation and re-tooling of a successful gifted program is an evolutionary process, the NAGC Standards detail a framework including both *minimum standards* (nominal requirements for satisfactory programs) and *exemplary standards* (characteristics of excellence in gifted education programming).

To help you focus on important aspects of gifted programming, the current *Standards* are divided into seven criterion areas: Program Design, Program Administration and Management, Student Identification, Curriculum and Instruction, Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling, Professional Development, and Program Evaluation.

Several **organizing principles** guided the work of the task force, including:

- Standards should encourage but not dictate approaches of high quality.
- Standards represent both requisite program outcomes and standards for excellence.
- Standards establish the level of performance to which all educational school districts and agencies should aspire.
- Standards represent professional consensus on critical practice in gifted education that most everyone is likely to find acceptable.
- Standards are observable aspects of educational programming and are directly connected to the continuous growth and development of gifted learners.

For more information and guidance about using the *NAGC Pre-K–Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards*, visit www.nagc.org.

Definitions

Gifted learners are “Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.” (*No Child Left Behind*, 2002).

Gifted education programming is a coordinated and comprehensive structure of informal and formal services provided on a continuing basis intended to effectively nurture gifted learners.

A standard is a criterion-based designated level of performance against which programming success is measured (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). The *Standards* here allow us to evaluate existing programs, compare services across schools and districts, and provide guidance for developing new programs for gifted learners. This document contains both *minimum standards*—requisite conditions for acceptable gifted education practice and *exemplary standards*—desirable and visionary conditions for excellence in gifted education practice.

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Pre-K–Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards



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Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Curriculum and Instruction

Description: Gifted education services must include curricular and instructional opportunities directed to the unique needs of the gifted learner.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Differentiated curriculum for the gifted learner must span grades pre-K-12.	1.0M Differentiated curriculum (curricular and instructional adaptations that address the unique learning needs of gifted learners) for gifted learners must be integrated and articulated throughout the district.	1.0E A well-defined and implemented curriculum scope and sequence should be articulated for all grade levels and all subject areas.
2. Regular classroom curricula and instruction must be adapted, modified, or replaced to meet the unique needs of gifted learners.	2.0M Instruction, objectives, and strategies provided to gifted learners must be systematically differentiated from those in the regular classroom. 2.1M Teachers must differentiate, replace, supplement, or modify curricula to facilitate higher level learning goals. 2.2M Means for demonstrating proficiency in essential regular curriculum concepts and processes must be established to facilitate appropriate academic acceleration. 2.3M Gifted learners must be assessed for proficiency in basic skills and knowledge and provided with alternative challenging educational opportunities when proficiency is demonstrated	2.0E District curriculum plans should include objectives, content, and resources that challenge gifted learners in the regular classroom. 2.1E Teachers should be responsible for developing plans to differentiate the curriculum in every discipline for gifted learners. 2.2E Documentation of instruction for assessing level(s) of learning and accelerated rates of learning should demonstrate plans for gifted learners based on specific needs of individual learners. 2.3E Gifted learners should be assessed for proficiency in all standard courses of study and subsequently provided with more challenging educational opportunities.
3. Instructional pace must be flexible to allow for the accelerated learning of gifted learners as appropriate.	3.0M A program of instruction must consist of advanced content and appropriately differentiated teaching strategies to reflect the accelerative learning pace and advanced intellectual processes of gifted learners.	3.0E When warranted, continual opportunities for curricular acceleration should be provided in gifted learners' areas of strength and interest while allowing a sufficient ceiling for optimal learning.
4. Educational opportunities for subject and grade skipping must be provided to gifted learners.	4.0M Decisions to proceed or limit the acceleration of content and grade acceleration must only be considered after a thorough assessment.	4.0E Possibilities for partial or full acceleration of content and grade levels should be available to any student presenting such needs.
5. Learning opportunities for gifted learners must consist of a continuum of differentiated curricular options, instructional approaches, and resource materials.	5.0M Diverse and appropriate learning experiences must consist of a variety of curricular options, instructional strategies, and materials. 5.1M Flexible instructional arrangements (e.g., special classes, seminars, resource rooms, mentorships, independent study, and research projects) must be available.	5.0E Appropriate service options for each student to work at assessed level(s) and advanced rates of learning should be available. 5.1E Differentiated educational program curricula for students pre-K-12 should be modified to provide learning experiences matched to students' interests, readiness, and learning styles.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Administration and Management

Description: Appropriate gifted education programming must include the establishment of a systematic means of developing, implementing, and managing services.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Appropriately qualified personnel must direct services for the education of gifted learners.	1.0M The designated coordinator of gifted education programming must have completed coursework or staff development in gifted education and display leadership ability to be deemed appropriately qualified.	1.0E The designated gifted programming coordinator must have completed a certification program or advanced degree program in gifted education.
2. Gifted education programming must be integrated into the general education program.	2.0M The gifted education program must create linkages between general education and gifted education at all levels.	2.0E Responsibility for the education of gifted learners is a shared one requiring strong relationships between the gifted education program and general education school wide.
3. Gifted education programming must include positive working relationships with constituency and advocacy groups, as well as with compliance agencies.	3.0M Gifted programming staff must establish ongoing parent communication. 3.1M Gifted programs must establish and use an advisory committee that reflects the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the school or school district's total student population, and includes parents, community members, students, and school staff members. 3.2M Gifted education programming staff must communicate with other on-site departments as well as other educational agencies vested in the education of gifted learners (e.g., other school districts, school board members, state departments of education, intermediate educational agencies, etc.).	3.0E The gifted education programming staff should facilitate the dissemination of information regarding major policies and practices in gifted education (e.g., student referral and screening, appeals, informed consent, student progress, etc.) to school personnel, parents, community members, etc. 3.1E Parents of gifted learners should have regular opportunities to share input and make recommendations about program operations with the gifted programming coordinator. 3.2E The gifted education program should consider current issues and concerns from other educational fields and agencies regarding gifted programming decision making on a regular basis.
4. Requisite resources and materials must be provided to support the efforts of gifted education programming.	4.0M Resources must be provided to support program operations. 4.1M Technological support must be provided for gifted education programming services. 4.2M The library selections must reflect a range of materials including those appropriate for gifted learners.	4.0E A diversity of resources (e.g., parent, community, vocational, etc.) should be available to support program operations. 4.1E Gifted education programming should provide state-of-the-art technology to support appropriate services. 4.2E The acquisition plan for purchasing new materials for the school should reflect the needs of gifted learners.

Table 2 of 7

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Design

Description: The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners.	1.0M Gifted programming services must be accessible to all gifted learners.	1.0E Levels of services should be matched to the needs of gifted learners by providing a full continuum of options.
2. Gifted education must be adequately funded.	2.0M Gifted education funding should be equitable compared to the funding of other local programming.	2.0E Gifted education programming must receive funding consistent with the program goals and sufficient to adequately meet them.
3. Gifted education programming must evolve from a comprehensive and sound base.	3.0M Gifted education programming must be submitted for outside review on a regular basis. 3.1M Gifted programming must be guided by a clearly articulated philosophy statement and accompanying goals and objectives. 3.2M A continuum of services must be provided across grades pre-K–12.	3.0E Gifted education programming should be planned as a result of consultation with informed experts. 3.1E The school or school district should have a mission/philosophy statement that addresses the need for gifted education programming. 3.2E A comprehensive pre-K–12 program plan should include policies and procedures for identification, curriculum and instruction, service delivery, teacher preparation, formative and summative evaluation, support services, and parent involvement.
4. Gifted education programming services must be an integral part of the general education school day.	4.0M Gifted education programming should be articulated with the general education program. 4.1M Appropriate educational opportunities must be provided in the regular classroom, resource classroom, separate, or optional voluntary environments.	4.0E Gifted services must be designed to supplement and build on the basic academic skills and knowledge learned in regular classrooms at all grade levels to ensure continuity as students progress through the program. 4.1E Local school districts should offer multiple service delivery options as no single service should stand alone.
5. Flexible groupings of students must be developed in order to facilitate differentiated instruction and curriculum.	5.0M The use of flexible grouping of gifted learners must be an integral part of gifted education programming.	5.0E Gifted learners should be included in flexible grouping arrangements in all content areas and grade levels to ensure that gifted students learn with and from intellectual peers.
6. Policies specific to adapting and adding to the nature and operations of the general education program are necessary for gifted education.	6.0M Existing and future school policies must include provisions for the needs of gifted learners.	6.0E Gifted education policies should exist for at least the following areas: early entrance, grade skipping, ability grouping, and dual enrollment.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Evaluation

Description: Program evaluation is the systematic study of the value and impact of services provided.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. An evaluation must be purposeful.	1.0M Information collected must reflect the interests and needs of most of the constituency groups.	1.0E Information collected should address pertinent questions raised by all constituency groups, and should be responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.
2. An evaluation must be efficient and economic.	2.0M School districts must provide sufficient resources for program evaluation.	2.0E School districts should allocate adequate time, financial support, and personnel to conduct systematic program evaluation.
3. An evaluation must be conducted competently and ethically.	3.0M Persons conducting the evaluation must be competent trustworthy. 3.1M The program evaluation design must address whether or not services have reached intended goals. 3.2M Instruments and procedures used for data collection must be valid and reliable for their intended use. 3.3M Ongoing formative and summative evaluation strategies must be used for substantive program improvement and development. 3.4M Individual data must be held confidential.	3.0E Persons conducting the evaluation should possess an expertise in program evaluation in gifted education. 3.1E The evaluation design should report the strengths and weaknesses found in the program, as well as critical issues that might influence program services. 3.2E Care should be taken to ensure that instruments with sufficient evidence of reliability and validity are used, and that they are appropriate for varying age, developmental levels, gender, and diversity of the target population. 3.3E Formative evaluations should be conducted regularly with summative evaluations occurring minimally every five years or more often as specified by state or local district policies. 3.4E All individuals who are involved in the evaluation process should be given the opportunity to verify information and the resulting interpretation.
4. The evaluation results must be made available through a written report.	4.0M Evaluation reports must present the evaluation results in a clear and cohesive format.	4.0E Evaluation reports should be designed to present results and encourage follow-through by stakeholders.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling

Description: Gifted education programming must establish a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional development of gifted learners.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Gifted learners must be provided with differentiated guidance efforts to meet their unique socio-emotional development.	1.0M Gifted learners, because of their unique socio-emotional development, must be provided with guidance and counseling services by a counselor who is familiar with the characteristics and socio-emotional needs of gifted learners.	1.0E Counseling services should be provided by a counselor familiar with specific training in the characteristics and socio-emotional needs (i.e., underachievement, multipotentiality, etc.) of diverse gifted learners.
2. Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance services especially designed for their unique needs.	2.0M Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance consistent with their unique strengths.	2.0E Gifted learners should be provided with college and career guidance that is appropriately different and delivered earlier than typical programs.
3. Gifted at-risk students must be provided with guidance and counseling to help them reach their potential.	3.0M Gifted learners who are at risk must have special attention, counseling, and support to help them realize their full potential.	3.0E Gifted learners who do not demonstrate satisfactory performance in regular and/or gifted education classes should be provided with specialized intervention services.
4. Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum in addition to differentiated guidance and counseling services.	4.0M Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum as part of differentiated curriculum and instructional services.	4.0E A well-defined and implemented affective curriculum scope and sequence containing personal/social awareness and adjustment, academic planning, and vocational and career awareness should be provided to gifted learners.
5. Underachieving gifted learners must be served rather than omitted from differentiated services.	5.0M Gifted students who are underachieving must not be exited from gifted programs because of related problems.	5.0E Underachieving gifted learners should be provided with specific guidance and counseling services that address the issues and problems related to underachievement.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development

Description: Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparation in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. A comprehensive staff development program must be provided for all school staff involved in the education of gifted learners.	<p>1.0M All school staff must be made aware of the nature and needs of gifted students.</p> <p>1.1M Teachers of gifted students must attend at least one professional development activity a year designed specifically for teaching gifted learners.</p>	<p>1.0E All school staff should be provided ongoing staff development in the nature and needs of gifted learners, and appropriate instructional strategies.</p> <p>1.1E All teachers of gifted learners should continue to be actively engaged in the study of gifted education through staff development or graduate degree programs.</p>
2. Only qualified personnel should be involved in the education of gifted learners.	<p>2.0M All personnel working with gifted learners must be certified to teach in the areas to which they are assigned, and must be aware of the unique learning differences and needs of gifted learners at the grade level at which they are teaching.</p> <p>2.1M All specialist teachers in gifted education must hold or be actively working toward a certification (or the equivalent) in gifted education in the state in which they teach.</p> <p>2.2M Any teacher whose primary responsibility for teaching includes gifted learners, must have extensive expertise in gifted education.</p>	<p>2.0E All personnel working with gifted learners should participate in regular staff development programs.</p> <p>2.1E All specialist teachers in gifted education should possess a certification/specialization or degree in gifted education.</p> <p>2.2E Only teachers with advanced expertise in gifted education should have primary responsibility for the education of gifted learners.</p>
3. School personnel require support for their specific efforts related to the education of gifted learners.	3.0M School personnel must be released from their professional duties to participate in staff development efforts in gifted education.	3.0E Approved staff development activities in gifted education should be funded at least in part by school districts or educational agencies.
4. The educational staff must be provided with time and other support for the preparation and development of the differentiated education plans, materials, curriculum.	4.0M School personnel must be allotted planning time to prepare for the differentiated education of gifted learners.	4.0E Regularly scheduled planning time (e.g., release time, summer pay, etc.) should be allotted to teachers for the development of differentiated educational programs and related resources.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Student Identification

Description: Gifted learners must be assessed to determine appropriate educational services.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. A comprehensive and cohesive process for student nomination must be coordinated in order to determine eligibility for gifted education services.	<p>1.0M Information regarding the characteristics of gifted students in areas served by the district must be annually disseminated to all appropriate staff members.</p> <p>1.1M All students must comprise the initial screening pool of potential recipients of gifted education services.</p> <p>1.2M Nominations for services must be accepted from any source (e.g., teachers, parents, community members, peers, etc.).</p> <p>1.3M Parents must be provided with information regarding an understanding of giftedness and student characteristics.</p>	<p>1.0E The school district should provide information annually, in a variety of languages, regarding the process for nominating students for gifted education programming services.</p> <p>1.1E The nomination process should be ongoing and screening of any student should occur at any time.</p> <p>1.2E Nomination procedures and forms should be available in a variety of languages.</p> <p>1.3E Parents should be provided with special workshops or seminars to gain a full meaning of giftedness.</p>
2. Instruments used for student assessment to determine eligibility for gifted education services must measure diverse abilities, talents, strengths, and needs in order to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate any strengths.	<p>2.0M Assessment instruments must measure the capabilities of students with provisions for the language in which the student is most fluent, when available.</p> <p>2.1M Assessments must be culturally fair.</p> <p>2.2M The purpose(s) of student assessments must be consistently articulated across all grade levels.</p> <p>2.3M Student assessments must be sensitive to the current stage of talent development.</p>	<p>2.0E Assessments should be provided in a language in which the student is most fluent, if available.</p> <p>2.1E Assessment should be responsive to students' economic conditions, gender, developmental differences, handicapping conditions, and other factors that mitigate against fair assessment practices.</p> <p>2.2E Students identified in all designated areas of giftedness within a school district should be assessed consistently across grade levels.</p> <p>2.3E Student assessments should be sensitive to all stages of talent development.</p>
3. A student assessment profile of individual strengths and needs must be developed to plan appropriate intervention.	<p>3.0M An assessment profile must be developed for each child to evaluate eligibility for gifted education programming services.</p> <p>3.1M An assessment profile must reflect the unique learning characteristics and potential and performance levels.</p>	<p>3.0E Individual assessment plans should be developed for all gifted learners who need gifted education.</p> <p>3.1E An assessment profile should reflect the gifted learner's interests, learning style, and educational needs.</p>
4. All student identification procedures and instruments must be based on current theory and research.	<p>4.0M No single assessment instrument or its results denies student eligibility for gifted programming services.</p> <p>4.1M All assessment instruments must provide evidence of reliability and validity for the intended purposes and target students.</p>	<p>4.0E Student assessment data should come from multiple sources and include multiple assessment methods.</p> <p>4.1E Student assessment data should represent an appropriate balance of reliable and valid quantitative and qualitative measures.</p>
5. Written procedures for student identification must include, at the very least, provisions for informed consent, student retention, student reassessment, student exiting, and appeals procedures.	<p>5.0M District gifted programming guidelines must contain specific procedures for student assessment at least once during the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.</p> <p>5.1M District guidelines must provide specific procedures for student retention and exiting, as well as guidelines for parent appeals.</p>	<p>5.0E Student placement data should be collected using an appropriate balance of quantitative and qualitative measures with adequate evidence of reliability and validity for the purposes of identification.</p> <p>5.1E District guidelines and procedures should be reviewed and revised when necessary.</p>

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